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# TIME FOR TAKE-OFF

**The British contest year begins with the UK Nationals on April 12th**, 156 days after the final show of an epic 2014, and it promises to be some year.

There are competitions every weekend bar one in April and May. Besides the usual UKBFF British Championships qualifiers, there is also BodyPower in Birmingham,

which includes an IFBB pro show, the European Championships in Spain and the huge FIBO trade show in Germany.

There's little let-up afterwards. This year there are 10 amateur Olympias, including one in Liverpool, and four Arnold Classics, not to mention the Olympia weekend in Las Vegas, the first European Games and the IFBB World Championships. Busy doesn't begin to describe it.

Ten years ago, opportunities for top amateurs were mainly limited to the world and European championships. Now there is a bewildering choice of events and it surprises me so many still want to turn pro considering it has been the graveyard of so many careers.

But dream they do and last year it came true for bodybuilder Nathan De Asha (who we profile this month), men's physique competitors Ryan John-Baptiste and Ben Noy, bikini fitness stars Nina Ross, Melissa Heywood, Ruth Dales and Nikki Robinson, and bodyfitness champion Maria Scotland. It will be interesting to see how they fare in the pro ranks and which new amateur stars emerge. It will also be interesting to see how bodybuilding develops.

The sudden, massive rise in popularity of men's physique and bikini fitness has caused some friction in recent years, particularly among old-school diehards who feel their sport has sold out. But new and old can live together, and together broaden the appeal of a sport that has sometimes been too inward looking.

Bodybuilding is booming—enjoy it and if you're not competing yourself, get to a show this spring. You'll be inspired. Check out [ukbff.co.uk](http://ukbff.co.uk) for event details. **FLEX**

**New British pro  
Nathan De Asha**



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# SEE IT THROUGH

HOW TO SET GOALS LIKE A TERMINATOR



**CALF TRUTH**  
When Arnold saw his calves growing in his mind, they started growing below his knees.

**Q HOW CAN I MAKE SURE I ACHIEVE MY GOALS?**

**■ For me, the key** to setting goals and achieving them always begins with visualisation. You have to create a picture in your mind of what you want to achieve and imagine it's already true. Then it's almost easy to get there because you know what it is you want—it just takes time and work.

People fail to achieve goals because they can't really see themselves succeeding, so they don't believe they can, and then they quit at the first sign of adversity. Successful people don't quit, because, in their minds, they've already won. It just isn't official yet.

I like to use the example of how I brought up my calves to illustrate this. When I finally acknowledged that they were a serious weak point, I began to visualise my calves all the time—I saw them growing and taking shape. This automatically led to me taking practical steps to make them grow. To help me concentrate even more, I cut the legs off my sweatpants so that I could see my calves whenever I trained. It didn't matter how puny they looked; I kept seeing them as champion-level calves. Ultimately, my calves grew, and my vision was fulfilled.

And that's the formula for success: create an image and let it lead you down a path that makes it real.

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# SIX WEEK ARM BLAST

**When you first started** training all you wanted to do was build bigger and stronger muscles, but as the years went by, the desire to build bigger arms started to set in. This mindset or training obsession is quite a normal phenomenon, so don't worry about it. But if you're not a genetic freak, it will never go away, believe me. There is something about big arms that drives the average bodybuilder crazy—while many of the other bodybuilders in the gym may not be as strong or even as well developed as you are, if they have huge arms they will, without a doubt, be the centre of attention.

To make things worse, these muscle freaks don't even have to work their arms harder than they do any other body part—their arms just grow big from regular training, while the rest of us struggle to add size to our biceps and triceps. Over the last 30 years I have photographed and observed countless world-class bodybuilders with some of the greatest arms in history but believe it or not, many of these guys could not win the Mr Olympia. On the other hand, I have photographed quite a few Mr Olympias who did not have arms that were all that exceptional compared to the rest of their amazing physiques.

So, can the average non-genetically gifted bodybuilder build great arms? Absolutely. Just don't expect to build arms like Robbie Robinson, Ronnie Coleman, Arnold, Sergio, Lee Priest or current four-time Mr Olympia Phil Heath. These guys built some of the greatest arms in bodybuilding, so try to be realistic.

Train your arms as hard as you possibly can and you will build biceps and triceps that will amaze the average guy in the street.

Here is an arm blast routine for you to follow for six weeks. Train only two days a week—Monday and Thursday, or Tuesday and Friday for instance. Begin your workouts with three sets of squats, seated dumbbell presses, bentover rows and bench presses—this should take you no more than 30–40 minutes. Work each exercise as hard as you can. These four compound movements will train your other body parts and they will also warm up your biceps and triceps.

Now prepare yourself physically and mentally to work your arms harder than you have ever done in your life. After one warm-up set of at least 12 reps on each exercise, do the following cycle with no rest between exercises:

1. Barbell curl
2. Close-reverse-grip pulldown to the upper chest
3. Close-grip triceps pushdown
4. Close-grip bench press

It's imperative to move on to each exercise as fast as you possibly can and you should aim to do at least 12 reps in your work sets. In other words, if you can do more than 12 reps, do them, but make sure you add a small amount of resistance next time. If you cannot complete 12 reps in perfect style, the poundage is too high so reduce it. As soon as you almost get your breath back from the first cycle, do another one.

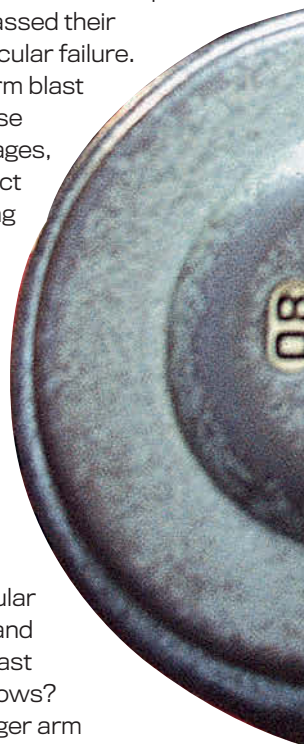
The barbell curl should be performed as strictly as you possibly

can and to complete muscular failure. The close-reverse-grip pulldown should be performed immediately after the curls, because the powerful strength of your back muscles will enable your biceps to be worked well past their point of usual muscular failure. Always try to get at least 12 reps, but be prepared to experience incredibly aching biceps the following day. When you cannot perform another single rep in perfect style, move straight onto close-grip triceps pressdowns, and once again shoot for 12 reps or more, to total failure.

Finally, lie down on a flat bench and get someone to lift the bar to you from its stand, so that you can move immediately into your first set of close-grip bench presses, using a 15–18 inch-wide hand spacing on the barbell. Make a point of slowly tensing your triceps every time you lock out. This time the superior strength of your chest and shoulders will enable your weaker triceps to be pushed well passed their normal point of muscular failure.

Throughout this arm blast always try to increase your training poundages, but never lose perfect muscular form during each and every repetition. When the six-week period is up, take seven days off from all training and then check out your arms. I hope they will have become bigger and stronger. Go back to your regular training for a while, and then give this arm blast another try. Who knows? Maybe you have bigger arm potential than you thought!

See you next month,  
and keep training.  
**CHRIS LUND FLEX**





PHIL  
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# 1<sup>ST</sup> SET

Phil Heath's  
blueprint for  
big arms

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Flex Lewis'  
top tips for  
packing on  
pounds of  
muscle

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Jay Cutler  
tells you how  
to correct  
muscle  
imbalances

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Anth  
"the Freak"  
Bailes on  
getting a  
wider back

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A look  
back at the  
career  
of former  
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guy Richard  
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# GIFTED

**Q** MY ARMS ARE GOOD, BUT I WANT TRICEPS THAT POP. CAN YOU GIVE ME SOME GUIDANCE ON BUILDING MY TRI'S?

**A** I understand what you're referring to. My arms were always pretty developed. Before I started training, playing basketball was a great workout for my biceps and triceps. But there were athletes like (former NBA player) Dan Majerle, who had impressive arms, and that motivated me to spend time on my triceps and biceps. I probably favoured triceps exercises because those muscles were useful in basketball. Later on, it was Kevin Levrone's triceps that impressed me.

It's important to always keep changing your training approach to every body part—the exercises, the angles, and the variety of movements. Periodisation is important; train using higher reps one session, then train really heavy the next. You have to get creative with stubborn body parts. Your body adapts to each stimulus very quickly, and you have to mix things up to surprise it to get it to keep responding. Don't be afraid to use machines—these days, some of them hit muscles better than a dumbbell or barbell can.

You didn't ask me about biceps, the flip side of the arm equation, so I'll assume you've got that covered. When you're doing this routine, remember to focus on your form. And get that contraction.



## PHIL HEATH'S TRICEPS ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Rope Pushdown	3	12
Decline Dumbbell Extension	3	12
Machine Dip*	3	12

\*Alternate with free-weight dips.

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# THE WELSH DRAGON

**Q** I'M THINKING OF MAKING THE MOVE TO A HEAVIER WEIGHT CLASS, BUT I'M NOT SURE HOW TO CHANGE MY DIET TO ACCOMMODATE THOSE PLANS. DO YOU HAVE NUTRITION TIPS FOR MAKING THE JUMP FROM HEAVY TO SUPER-HEAVY? HOW DOES MY DIET NEED TO CHANGE?

**A** Without knowing more details about you and your present diet, it's difficult to be too specific because everybody is different. But generally I think the best approach is to increase the number of meals you're having each day and to add in nighttime meals—set the alarm so you can wake up, slam down your shake, and then go back to sleep. I don't believe in counting calories, but a good place for you to start would be to add an extra 50 grams of protein to your diet over the course of the day.

It's a challenge, especially if you're like me, and you never have a chance to build up an appetite before you're eating again. Then it practically becomes about force-feeding yourself. When I was an amateur making the move into a heavier weight class, I increased the number of meals, and I ate really clean, which is sort of unusual. Lots of guys would choose to bulk up by eating everything in sight. My philosophy has always been, "Eat shit, look like shit", because a clean diet is the one my body responds to best.

That's not to say that in the off-season there isn't room for a cheat meal in your weekly diet. Sometimes you've got to have one. Just remember that the more bulk you add over the off-season, the harder you'll have to diet when it's time for contest prep.



CHARLES LOWTHIAN





**Seated cable rows helped Jay Cutler win four Sandows.**

# IRON JAY



**HELP! MY BACK LAGS BEHIND MY CHEST AND ARMS, BUT I DON'T WANT TO LAY OFF CHEST AND ARMS ENTIRELY TO BRING MY BACK UP.**

## **It's easy to create balance**

even if you suffer from lagging body parts. For a lot of guys, back workouts are not given the attention they deserve. But the bodybuilders who make an impression have more than big chests and thick arms—they have well-built backs.

Intensity obviously is something many of us top pros discuss. Don't underestimate the power of your mind to grow muscles. You need to learn how your body responds—to

different exercises, to free weights versus machines—so you can establish a stronger mind-to-muscle connection. Feeling each rep rather than slinging the weights around is very important.

Now, as for the body parts you have that are well-developed, reduce volume and intensity to keep development at an even pace. You still want to train those parts, but you must not train them as hard as you train your back. Train back at

## CUTLER'S "BRING UP YOUR BACK" ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Pull-up	3	10-12
Seated Cable Row	3	10-12
Bentover Row	3	10-12
T-bar Row	3	10-12
Pullover	3	10-12

the start of your workout, or dedicate one training day a week to back and nothing else. You can do this without sacrificing the time you need for the rest of your body. Monitor your progress and you'll know when it's OK to go back to your normal routine.



# THE FREAK

**Q** DO YOU HAVE ANY TIPS TO GAIN BACK WIDTH? I DO LOTS OF WIDE-GRIP MOVEMENTS BUT MY LAT SPREAD ISN'T GETTING ANY MORE IMPRESSIVE.

**Back is a very important** body part so you're right to address this issue. The old saying "contests are won when you turn around" comes to mind.

Wide grip for wide lats is a myth. Although a wide grip does work the back, it mostly hits the rhomboids and teres major muscles. Try doing pulldowns with a narrower, more parallel grip one week, then with a close underhand grip the next. Alternate. You will get a much better contraction with these grips. Make sure your form is tight. Most guys use way too much poundage on back and consequently their biceps and forearms do most of the work. Get those elbows back and **squeeze!**

## ANTH BAILES' BACK ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Dumbbell or Machine Pullover	3 warm-up sets 1 heavy work set	10-12 6-10
Underhand-grip Pulldown	1 warm-up set 1 heavy work set	10-12 6-10
Barbell Row	1 warm-up set 1 heavy work set	10-12 6-10
Rack Deadlift	3 warm-up sets 1 heavy work set	10-12 6-10
Cable Row	2 light sets	20

## FREAK TWEETS

**Quick quad finisher for you!**  
Try some high reps at the end of your workout

**#transformationtuesday**  
It isn't gonna happen overnight... but just keep going

**First session back on the Stairmaster... been a while!**  
**#wtf #gassin**

CHRISTOPHER BAILEY





# RICHARD JONES

THE BRIEF, BRIGHT CAREER OF A BODYBUILDING PHENOMENON

“I train with quality in mind rather than quantity. The fact is I’ll never be a mass monster. I rely on my shape to win contests.” So said Richard Jones in 2003 after he triumphed at the USA Championships, taking the overall as a light-heavyweight. Having entered only Southern California contests previously, the 5’7”, 198-pound policeman cast a spell over the NPC USA with his classical lines, dramatic poses, and high-def conditioning. “Future Mr O?” FLEX asked when we featured the 29-year-old on our cover. The conjecture reflected what an affront he was to the more-is-better standards of the day.

After qualifying for the O on his first attempt, he sank to next-to-last at the 2004 Mr Olympia. While his upper body was O-ready, his wheels were undersized. Then he vanished, retiring after only two pro shows. Jones returned in 2009 for a 202 contest, but, smooth, he again landed far out of the running. He hasn’t competed since. His ideal home would’ve been the 212 division, had there been one a decade ago. There, he could’ve maintained his archetypal lines even as colossi clashed on the O stage. It wasn’t to be. Still, for a little more than a year between the summer of 2003 and the fall of 2004, Richard Jones was a one-man revolution. **FLEX**

## JONES ON BICEPS TRAINING

“I want to stress the importance of mixing it up when training biceps. I can’t think of another body part that responds better to variety.”

“With EZ-bar curls, it’s important to use as much weight as possible but it’s just as important to maintain strict form.”

“I always supinate my wrists [turn from palms facing each other to palms facing up] as I do alternating dumbbell curls. This is a crucial function of the biceps muscle.”

“What I like about incline dumbbell curls is the stretch I get at the beginning of the movement.”

### FLEX FACT

It had been 14 years since a competitor lighter than a heavyweight won the USA overall until Jones did so.

## JONES’ BICEPS ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
EZ-bar Curl	4	8-12
Alternating Dumbbell Curl	4	8-12
Seated Incline Dumbbell Curl	4	12-15

CHRIS LUND







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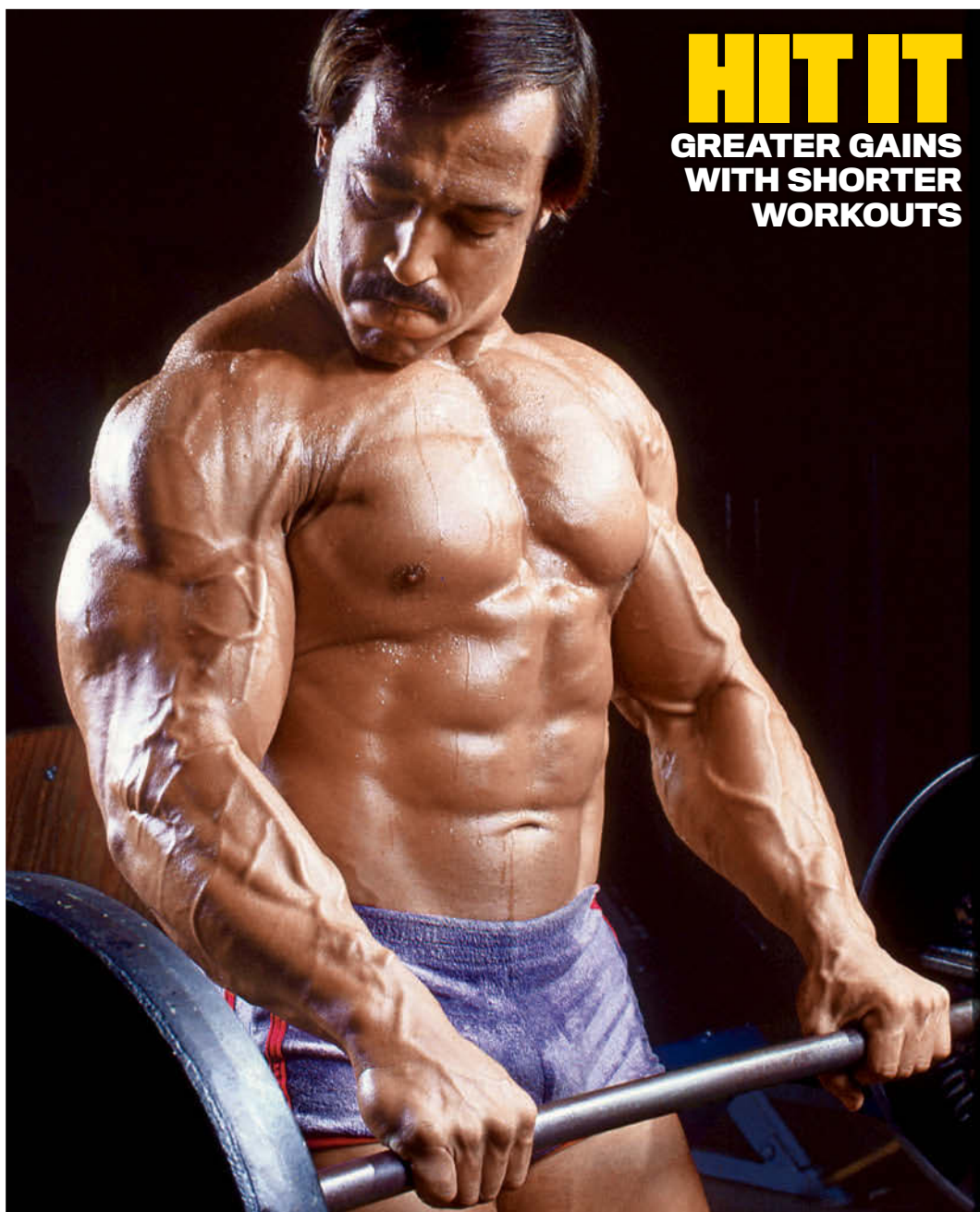
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HIT trainer Lee Labrada was second in the Olympia twice (1989-90).

**HIT happens.** For the past four decades, high-intensity training—popularly known as HIT—has been bodybuilding’s revolutionary philosophy. Countering both the prominent crank-up-the-volume ethos as well as the stimulate-don’t-annihilate school of moderation, HIT calls for maximum intensity with minimum sets. This has never been the dominant workout strategy. In fact, in its purest form it has been scorned, despite the phenomenal success of devoted HIT-man and six-time Mr Olympia Dorian Yates. That said, its lasting impact on how most bodybuilders train and recuperate has been great. In the first of a three-part series, we’ll explore HIT’s origins, its basic principles, and why turning the intensity up and the volume down may be a revolution worth joining.

# HIT MAKING

THE FUNDAMENTALS OF  
HIGH-INTENSITY TRAINING

ROBERT REIFF

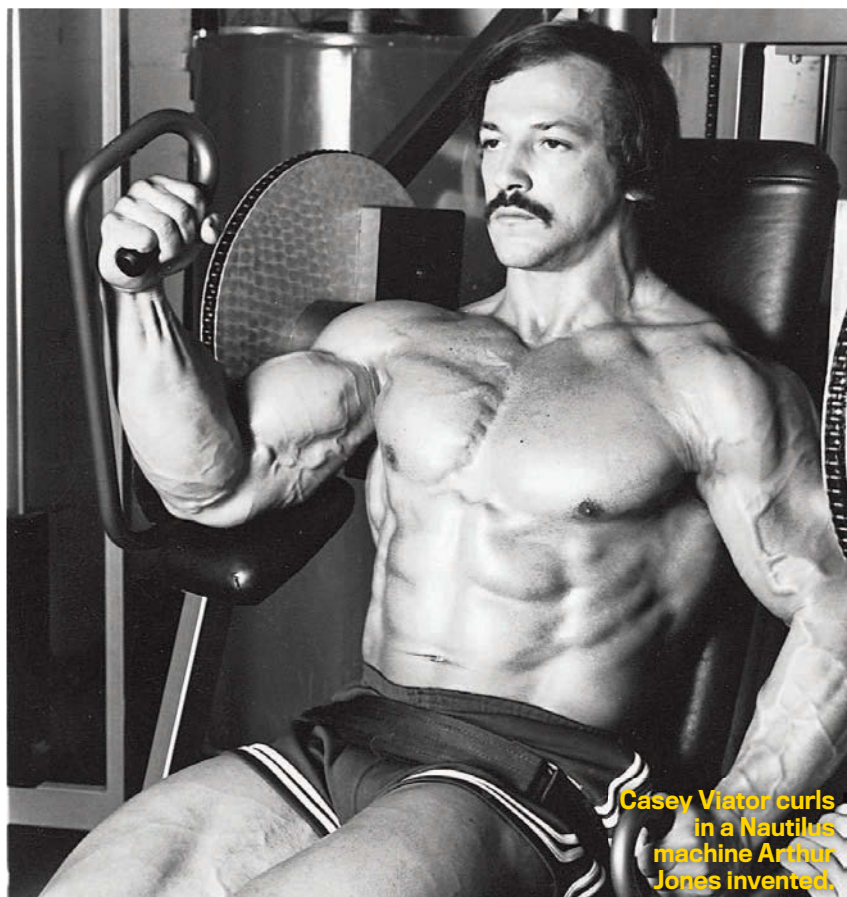


## KEEPING UP WITH JONES

Journey back to 1971 when reigning Mr Olympia, Arnold Schwarzenegger, was toiling in Gold's Gym Venice twice a day and stressing each body part via marathon sessions three times per week. That was also the year that an article touted the regime of densely constructed Casey Viator, who had just won the Mr America at the really young age of 19. Everything about Viator's routine seemed bonkers. He trained only thrice weekly, hitting his whole body in each session; and he did, at most, a handful of sets per body part. For example, he did only three sets for quadriceps and one for hamstrings! Another key difference between his programme and the prevalent style was the fact that each of his sets was pushed to all-out failure at around 20 reps.

Viator did not dream up this anarchic approach. The visionary behind what came to be called high-intensity training was Arthur Jones, a globe-trotting adventurer who, after 20 years of development, had recently begun selling his Nautilus machines. Frustrated with the scarcity of exercise research, Jones had conceived his cam machines and also the principles for focusing workouts not on increasing resistance or volume but on intensity. At the 1970 Mr America, Viator met Jones. Soon thereafter, the teenager moved to Florida to exercise under the visionary's tutelage. The following year, Viator became the youngest Mr America of all time, and his HIT routine sent shock waves through the body-building world.

There's more to HIT's origin story, including the legendary Colorado Experiment of 1973, in which Viator supposedly gained 63 pounds over only 28 days. But what is crucial to note is just how



Casey Viator curls in a Nautilus machine Arthur Jones invented.

dramatically high-intensity training diverged from the dominant style. Whereas Schwarzenegger did 66 sets for chest over the course of a week (22 in each of three workouts), Jones advocated a mere six (three in each of two workouts) for most people. This certainly got HIT noticed (and helped sell Nautilus machines), but few who tried it in the '70s stuck with it for long. It was too much too soon. As we'll explore in future issues, it would be up to Mike Mentzer, Lee Labrada, Dorian Yates, and others to modify HIT and widen its impact. Eventually, almost all bodybuilders came to train muscles less frequently and

with a greater emphasis on intensity. Meanwhile, the workouts the iconoclast Arthur Jones prescribed over 40 years ago remain revolutionary today.

## HIT FOUNDING PRINCIPLES

**Growth is correlated to exercise intensity.**

**Sets must be pushed to absolute failure. This means you go until you fail to perform another rep with proper form.**

**Such full-failure sets must be kept to a minimum. Too many such sets will deplete your ability to recuperate.**

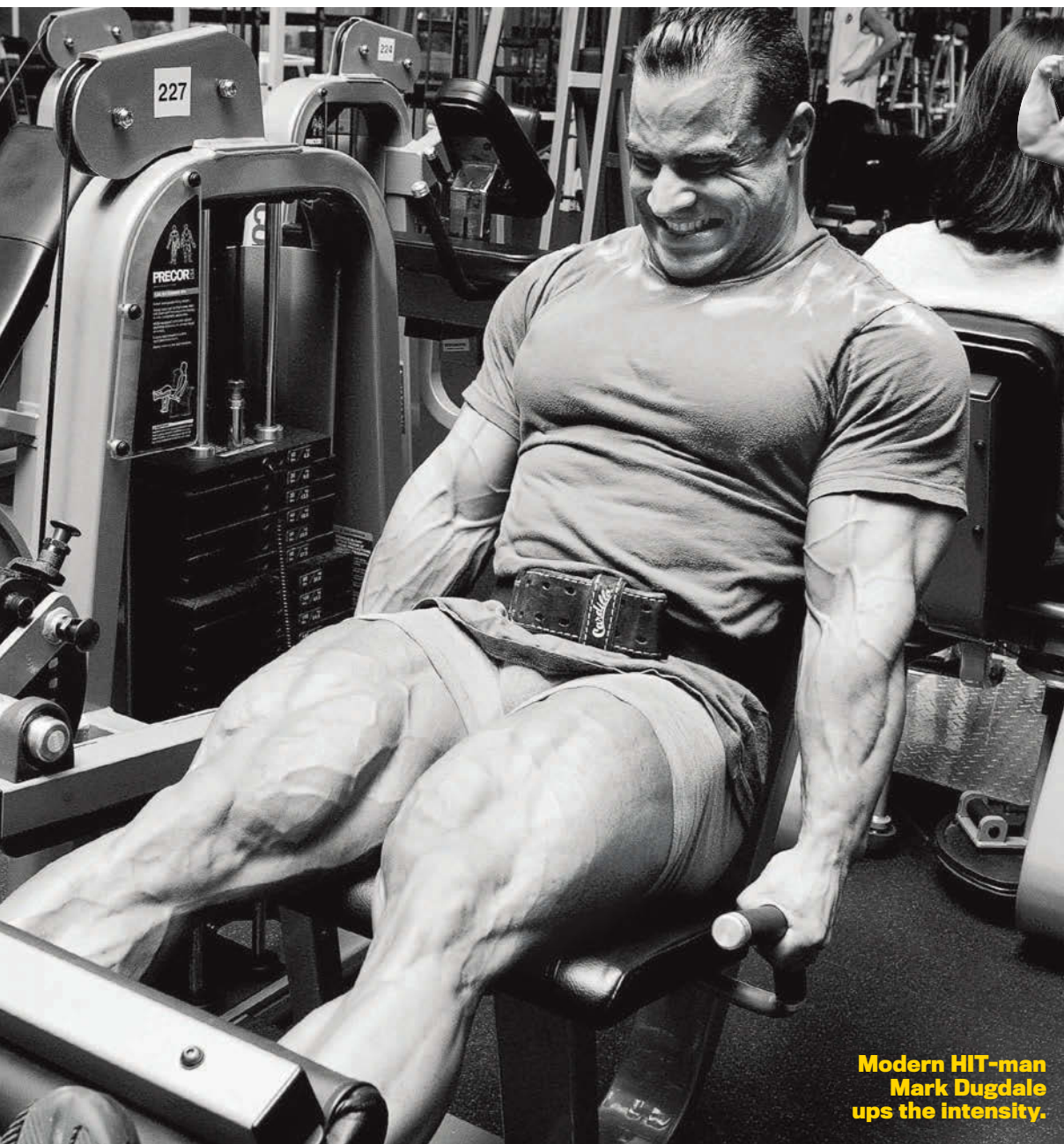
**To allow for maximum recovery and growth, workouts must be brief and infrequent.**

**No amount of additional sets will compensate for not training with maximum intensity.**



## THE SECRET

"The secret, if there is one, is high intensity. And when you actually train with high intensity, you don't need a lot of volume." —ARTHUR JONES



**Modern HIT-man Mark Dugdale ups the intensity.**



**FLEX FACT**

Casey Viator was only 19 when he won the 1971 Mr America. That remains the record for the Mr America (now the NPC Nationals) overall title.

**ORIGINAL HIT LEG WORKOUT**

EXERCISE	WARM-UPS	SETS	REPS
Hack Squat	2	1	15-25
Leg Extension	1	1	15-25
Squat	2	1	15-25
Lying Leg Curl	1	1	15-25
Stiff-leg Deadlift	1	1	15-25

**HIT FUNDAMENTALS TIP SHEET**

To increase intensity further, include pre-exhaust supersets. For example, do a set of leg presses immediately after leg extensions.

Emphasise the eccentric (negative) half of reps as much as the concentric (positive) half.

As Jones prescribed for Viator, focus on high reps, typically around 20 per set.

Consider 20 reps a rough signpost for selecting your weight. Go to absolute, full-rep failure on every working set no matter what the final number is.





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LIGHT WEIGHT VS.  
STRETCHING

# WARM-UP FOR MAXIMUM POWER

## HYPOTHESIS

Research shows that warming up a muscle before maximal exertion optimises performance and reduces the risk of injury. Because most muscle injuries are “pulls” or tears to muscles, tendons, and ligaments, stretching the muscle before maximal exertion should help to avoid injury and allow optimised performance.

## RESEARCH

A study performed at Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia, involving 12 male athletes compared the effects of stretching against warming up using a light weight for the exercise to be performed. To assess lower-body power, subjects were tested using a weighted jump squat. Those in the stretching group performed two 30-second stretches of each of the lower-body muscle groups (i.e., hamstrings, quads, glutes, and calves). Those in the light-weight group performed barbell box squats doing two low-intensity warm-up sets of 10 reps followed by three sets of their estimated three-rep max (3RM). Leg power was then tested using weighted jump squats on a Smith machine before and after the warm-ups. Power was calculated using a linear position transducer connected to the bar of the Smith machine.

## FINDINGS

Power output increased significantly following the squatting warm-up. Power output significantly decreased following the static-stretching warm-up.

## CONCLUSION

**Although it seems logical to stretch a muscle to prevent injury, research shows that stretching the muscle actually decreases its ability to generate power.** If maximum strength and power are desired while training, static stretching should be avoided before performing a set. Performing a few light-weight sets increases power output and therefore is the best method for warming up.



## APPLICATION

**Bottom line, stretching before a lift is counterproductive. Instead, on the first exercise for each muscle group, select a weight that is approximately 50% of the weight you will use for your work sets and rep out enough to feel a good burn. Do this a couple of times before loading up the bar for your first working set. Once warmed up, you will not need warm-up sets when doing other exercises for that muscle group.**

PAVEL YTHUALL



**Chris Cormier  
blasts a heavy set  
of incline presses  
to hit his upper  
pecs.**



# MAJOR PECS

## TARGET YOUR ENTIRE CHEST WITH THIS SUPER WORKOUT

**A well-developed chest** is the immediate focal point of the entire upper body. Thick pecs symbolise upper-body strength and power. In addition, building thickness in the upper portion separates weekend jocks from true bodybuilders.

There are misconceptions about the best way to target the inner and upper pecs. Studies show that simply changing the width of your grip will not increase the emphasis on the inner pecs. In fact, the inner portion of the pecs (sternal head) cannot be isolated from the rest of the pec any more than

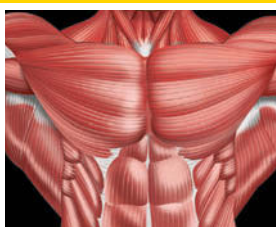
you can isolate one portion of a rubber band while stretching it from either end. Thickness along the sternum is determined by the orientation of the ribs adjoining the sternum (genetics) and the thickness of the pecs. Overall pec development requires resistance at three angles— incline, flat, and decline—to cover both the clavicular and sternocostal heads.

As for filling in that inner or upper chest, when deciding what qualifies as “incline”, remember that it isn’t so much determined by the angle of the bench as much as the angle of the sternum. You’ll notice that even at a moderate incline, the sternum may still be parallel to the floor. True incline requires the sternum to angle downwards.

### EVERY ANGLE PEC WORKOUT

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Incline Press (bar to chin)	4	8–12
Dip (weighted if necessary)	3–4	8–12
Pec Deck*	3	12–15

\*Hands at shoulder level and elbows up and out.



# MISSING OUT

The most important thing you're not doing

**No one ever achieved anything special by exercising moderation.** To make your mark you have to put in the hard yards. We all know this, which is why, when we come to read training advice, we gravitate towards the hardcore. Boring advice just doesn't sell.

As bodybuilders, we need to accept that there is a big problem with this attitude. While we need to keep pushing the boundaries in the gym—because if we don't we won't grow—we also need to accept that progress is neither linear nor made under times of physical duress.

In a nutshell, we need to realise that pushing like a demon for a given period needs to be followed by a short period of backing off. Deloading, as this is known, allows us to do a combination of two things:

1. Take a rest from an all-out gym assault. You may not think you need it but if longevity is your aim and you're really working hard, then trust me—a 5–10 day deload every few months is exactly what you need.
2. "Supercompensate" from the temporary overreaching of a hard workout programme. While you may be enough of a warrior to want to ignore the first point, this supercompensation cannot be ignored if you want maximum results in minimum time.

## SUPER-COMPENSATION

Hypertrophy is an adaptation to biological stress. The more we throw at the body the better. In other words, the greater the stress, the greater the adaptation.

That's why dropping to two sets per exercise would see Phil Heath lose 20 lbs of muscle in just a few



Incline bench press

JASON BREEZE

months. He needs greater stress to maintain his sheer level of mass. In sports science terminology, the highest peak of adaptation is known as supercompensation because it does what it says on the tin—you get extra compensation (muscle in this case) for all the stress you put your body through. The downside is that you need to grind yourself into the floor to make it happen.

If you're feeling good and bouncing around like the Duracell bunny, you're not doing enough to get real supercompensation. Every bodybuilder looking for maximal adaptations needs to hit a planned overtraining wall—known as overreaching—then back off on volume and just watch the body adapt spectacularly via supercompensation. You don't even necessarily need to reduce your training intensity.

In my opinion, this is the main thing

missing from most experienced bodybuilders' training regimes.

## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Here's a reminder of the macrocycle that we set up a few months ago:

- Weeks 1-3:**  
**Hypertrophy Training**
- Weeks 4-5:**  
**Strength Training**
- Week 6-9:**  
**Hypertrophy Training**
- Weeks 10-11:**  
**Strength Training**
- Week 12:**  
**Back-off/Deload Week**

If you have pushed everything as hard as you can, by the time you come off the wave loading cycle from last month's column your body should be primed for a growth spurt, so long as you sit back, eat properly and deload effectively.



## Decline dumbbell press



## OPTION 1 CHEST &amp; BACK DELOAD

EXERCISE	TEMPO	SETS	REPS	REST
Supinated bentover row	3010	2	8-10	90 secs
<b>SUPERSET WITH</b>				
Incline bench press	4010	2	7-9	90 secs
V-bar semi supinated chin-up	3010	2	8-10	90 secs
<b>SUPERSET WITH</b>				
Decline dumbbell press	4010	2	8-10	90 secs

## OPTION 2 CHEST &amp; BACK DELOAD

EXERCISE	TEMPO	SETS	REPS	REST
Supinated bentover row	3011	2*	8-10	120 secs
V-bar semi supinated chin-up	3111	2**	6	120 secs
Incline bench press	4010	2***	10	120 secs
Decline dumbbell press	3010	2****	8-10	90 secs

\*Final set, use 10-second rest-pause to extend the set twice more.

\*\*Once you hit failure on the final set, do partial chin-ups. When you can't do any more, rep out with half body-weight supinated close-grip pulldowns.

\*\*\*Finish with a triple drop set.

\*\*\*\*Once you hit failure do wide-grip push-ups to negative failure.

NICK MITCHELL is a leading personal trainer who owns the worldwide Ultimate Performance gym business ([upfitness.co.uk](http://upfitness.co.uk))

In case you missed the previous three articles in this series (January, February and March issues), you can buy back issues in print format from [backissues.flexonline.co.uk](http://backissues.flexonline.co.uk) or in digital format from <https://dig.flexonline.eu/>

STOCKPHOTO

There are two ways to deload in my book. The first is the classic strength training deload. Simply pick two exercises per bodypart and do two working sets of six to eight reps max, pushing hard and at most hitting concentric failure only. Check out the example chest and back workout to get an idea of what to do.

You get in and out of the gym in no time and shouldn't feel much fatigue at all. This is the option to choose if you're displaying any signs of over-training, the most telling being plain old lethargy and sluggishness.

Even if you're full of beans when you reach the deload week, I'd still urge you to cut back on the volume. The difference here would be that rather than having a very simple, relatively non-taxing workout, you'd opt for a low volume, high intensity Mentzer/Yates-style session. I love these for hypertrophy, but only when coming off a more volume-focused period. Check out the option two workout for an example. **FLEX**

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# FOOD & SUPPS

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**You may start to wonder why you ever used another protein!**



# CHIPOTLE BEAN SALAD

**SERVES 4**

**Most guys don't** eat nearly enough beans. That's a shame, considering that convenient tinned beans are a quick way to bulk up your lunch box with slow-digesting carbs, plant-based protein, fat-fighting fibre, and energy-boosting iron. Rinsing tinned beans has been shown to lower their sodium levels considerably. Smoky-tasting chipotle chillies in adobo sauce can be found in the Mexican food section of most supermarkets. As with other chilli pepper products, they get their punch from the metabolism-revving compound capsaicin. Avocado provides creamy texture and a good dose of heart-healthy monounsaturated fat.

## INGREDIENTS

**150 g** bagged frozen pepper strips

**3 (400 g) tins**

kidney beans, drained and rinsed

**160 g** tinned sweetcorn

**2** tomatoes, chopped

**115 g** reduced-fat soured cream

**1** tinned chipotle chilli pepper in adobo sauce, finely chopped

Juice of **1/2** lime

**1/2 tsp** cumin powder

**1** avocado, diced

## DIRECTIONS

Prepare pepper strips according to package directions. In a large bowl, toss together pepper strips, kidney beans, corn, and tomatoes. In a small bowl, stir together soured cream, chipotle, lime juice, and cumin. Toss soured cream mixture with bean mixture. Top with avocado and serve.

## NUTRITIONAL INFO PER SERVING

CALORIES	PROTEIN	FAT	CARBS	FIBRE	SODIUM
<b>388</b>	<b>18 G</b>	<b>13 G</b>	<b>55 G</b>	<b>19 G</b>	<b>162 MG</b>

## FOOD OF THE MONTH AVOCADOS

**FLEX** has long recommended avocados as a staple for bodybuilders. That's partly because avocados contain more protein and fat than most fruits. Here are some numbers on this fleshy, fatty fruit: 100 grams contain 160 calories, with 2 g protein, 18 g fat, and 15 g carbs, as well as 7 g fibre.



# BRAN: NEW RESEARCH

A RECENT STUDY SHOWS THAT THIS FIBRE SOURCE HELPS FIGHT FAT

BRAN HELPS  
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INFLAMMATION  
AND OXIDATIVE  
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**The bad news** for bodybuilders is that very little nutrition research is targeted at them. The good news is that healthy, athletic people often have an even more profound response than those in at-risk populations.

A recent study showed that consuming a diet high in bran from finger millet helps reduce problems such as inflammation, oxidative stress, and imbalances in microflora in the GI tract in the obese. Interestingly, these are the same conditions that bodybuilders often endure when they're following intense exercise and challenging diet plans.

Every bodybuilder should consider adding supplemental or whole-food bran to his or her diet. Bran is, essentially, the outer portion of most grains and is low in impact carbs. Choose forms that contain smaller amounts of the starchy "germ" that increases insulin release. Consume in the morning or with whole-food meals, but not before or after workouts.

## TRY THIS **FRUIT WITH YOUR EGGS**

Many bodybuilders don't eat enough fruit because they fear the fructose content. But fruit also contains fibre, which bodybuilders often take in too little of. While everyone should avoid having large amounts of fruit juice, you can add chopped mangoes to your salsa and add 85-115 grams of this garnish on top of scrambled eggs. Or, for a unique treat, make an omelette with chopped pineapple, papaya, and Gruyère cheese.

GETTY IMAGES

# WHOLE-FAT vs. REDUCED-FAT CHEESE

**Many bodybuilders** don't place cheese very high on their list of preferred foods. But when you take the following facts into account, you may reconsider upping your cheese consumption, especially when you're trying to cut carbs.

**Cheese contains nearly as much protein per gram as beef or chicken.**

**Cheese delivers more fat than high-protein meats, which helps slow delivery of protein, increasing the length of time aminos are available in your system.**

**Many forms of cheese contain virtually no carbs.**

**Many forms of cheese contain healthy bacteria known as microflora.**

Most whole-fat cheeses, including cheddar, blue and Emmental (Swiss), are great choices for those seeking to cut carbs and increase the length of time that protein delivers aminos. However, reduced-fat/processed cheeses remove beneficial fats, replacing them with carbs. This speeds up the rate at which they digest and encourages insulin release.



**SATURATED FAT IN CHEESE HELPS PROMOTE HIGH TESTOSTERONE LEVELS**

## CHOOSE THIS

### Aged whole-fat cheese

Some types of cheese get a bad rap. Go with chunks of aged cheese that contain whole fats and healthy bacteria. **Eat about 60 grams of these cheeses as a snack for sustained delivery of aminos**, especially before bed, when you want to avoid carbs and keep aminos in your system longer.

## DIET SOS

How do I avoid going to bed hungry when I'm on a diet?

### Eat before you go to bed!

That may sound shocking, but starving yourself while you're trying to sleep won't help you achieve your physique goals. Hunger pangs make it hard to sleep, too. You can stir up a protein shake (emphasising slow-digesting casein) or try this month's Dude Food meal.

### Consume plenty of fibre with your bedtime snack.

You can get fibre from whole-food sources, a standard fibre product, or glucomannan—a bodybuilding-friendly source of fibre derived from the konjac plant and found in many products.

With your last meal, include a dose of fibre to slow digestion. Fibre will also swell with water, helping fill your stomach to keep you from feeling hungry.

### Consume dietary fats to further slow digestion.

The key is to eat enough that you aren't hungry when you go to bed—or during the middle of the night. Think of high-fat-content deli meat and cheeses, olives, even those egg yolks you'd normally throw out.



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**811 BCAA UNLIMITED** is a tablet formula containing the branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs) and vitamin B6. This formula is unique in that it contains a high ratio of leucine (8 parts) to isoleucine (1 part) and valine (1 part). Hence, the name "811". **AMINO ACIDS** are the building blocks of muscle, and of the 20

essential amino acids (meaning they must be supplied by the diet) the BCAAs—leucine, isoleucine and valine—are perhaps the most important for physique athletes. In fact, the BCAAs make up about 30–35% of skeletal muscle protein and are unique in their roles in controlling protein metabolism, neural function, and blood sugar and insulin regulation.

**Leucine** is considered the king of amino acids because scientists have shown that it can increase muscle protein synthesis all by itself. Whey protein contains a high concentration of leucine, and this is thought to be one reason why whey is such an effective muscle builder. Research has clearly demonstrated that leucine stimulates the amino acid/energy sensor mTOR (mammalian target of rapamycin). mTOR in turn stimulates protein synthesis via two independent mechanisms that are active in skeletal muscle, especially during exercise and recovery. Several studies have demonstrated just how potent leucine is with respect to muscle growth. For example, one study demonstrated that an isolated dose of 2.5 grams of leucine could effectively stimulate muscle protein synthesis. This "leucine trigger" has unleashed a relatively new, yet simple and effective strategy in athletes seeking to gain muscle mass: eat moderately sized meals every 4–6 hours, but between meals sip on a leucine-rich "cocktail". At 10 times the muscle building strength of any other amino acid, this is a good strategy!

**Isoleucine** and **valine** are the other two BCAAs that are snatched up by the muscles to form glucose during exercise. Isoleucine also plays a role in regulating blood sugar and synthesis-

ing haemoglobin (which carries oxygen throughout the body), while valine has mild stimulant properties and can reduce appetite at higher doses.

Collectively, the BCAAs are used by many athletes between meals in the hopes of sparing muscle protein breakdown, restoring anabolic signalling, and (potentially) up-regulating fat loss. The BCAAs are unique among amino acids because they are the only ones thought to bypass the liver and be metabolised directly in skeletal muscle. Even though all three BCAAs utilise the same mechanism to enter muscle, most experts advise against taking high doses of just one amino acid, and I generally agree with this assertion because when only one BCAA is available to the body, the other two can become "rate limiting". In other words, leucine works best to stimulate muscle protein synthesis when isoleucine and valine are also around at normal "permissive" levels. Typically, BCAAs are used several times per day, particularly during dieting phases or when muscles are especially sore from training.

Experimentally, BCAAs have also been shown to help speed muscle recovery from intense training. Although the mechanisms are not completely clear, it appears that BCAAs act as signalling nutrients and are able to promote the phosphorylation of proteins directly involved in muscle protein synthesis (mTOR, eukaryotic initiation factors, etc). A recent study showed that low doses of whey protein (i.e. 6.25 grams) can be as anabolic as higher doses (i.e. 20 grams) if extra leucine is added into the whey mixture. I'd speculate that even greater increases would be observed if a blend of BCAAs were utilised rather than straight leucine. In addition, some scientists have speculated that long-term use of BCAAs may also aid in fat loss efforts, as isoleucine has been shown to increase the activity of genes controlling fat burning and decrease the activity of genes controlling fat storage. Some data also exists that shows leucine itself can increase fatty acid oxidation and increase mitochondrial biogenesis (translation: more mitochondria) in both muscle cells and fat cells.

Lastly, many endurance athletes also





use BCAAs to combat fatigue and enhance their aerobic performance. During prolonged aerobic exercise, BCAAs are thought to reduce the uptake of L-tryptophan (an amino acid that is converted to serotonin) into the brain. The end result is a reduction in what is known as "central fatigue" and enhanced performance. In addition, at least one study has reported increases in red blood cell count, haemoglobin and haematocrit in subjects given only 2.2 grams of BCAAs during middle and long-distance endurance training. This seems to suggest an "EPO-like" effect of BCAAs that would improve performance. That said, endurance athletes wishing to try BCAAs should do so in combination with their normal intake of carbohydrates.

**GRADE: ★★★★★**

**REASON:** BCAAs are versatile compounds that can enhance the effects of most intense training programmes. If you don't eat 4-5 moderate sized meals a day, adding BCAAs to your diet can probably help you. To build more lean mass/

*strength and help trashed muscles recover more quickly, take extra BCAAs with your pre- and post-workout meals/shakes, especially if they contain less than 20 grams of total protein. Otherwise, use BCAAs between meals and at breakfast, especially if you are a small eater.*

**VITAMIN B6** is a water-soluble vitamin that is essential for health. Essential in this case means it has to be obtained from the diet because humans cannot synthesise it internally. Vitamin B6 is found in high concentrations in chickpeas, tuna, turkey, bok choy, spinach, beef, cauliflower and other fortified foods. Despite this, deficiencies in vitamin B6 are quite common because many food sources contain the glycosylated form that has reduced bioavailability.

Vitamin B6 is intimately involved in carbohydrate, fat and protein metabolism in the liver. In addition, it acts as an important enzyme in the biosynthesis of haemoglobin (which helps transport oxygen throughout the body) and in the

production of gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), a neurotransmitter which helps regulate sleep cycles and blood pressure. Supplementation with vitamin B6 also helps decrease urinary oxalate levels, which are a risk factor in kidney stone formation. Some studies have also reported that vitamin B6 can improve cognitive function and memory.

**GRADE: ★★★★★**

**REASON:** Small, daily doses of vitamin B6 can help your body produce physical and mental energy, fight off bacteria and viruses, and support the anabolic effects of protein ingestion. However, it should be noted that even though vitamin B6 is a water-soluble vitamin, prolonged supplementation with high doses (> 100 mg/day) should be avoided as it has been shown to result in pain and numbness in the extremities. **FLEX**

#### THE RATINGS

- ★★★★★ Outstanding scientific research on humans available
- ★★★★ Solid research available; anecdotally effective
- ★★★ Not much human research available but premise is sound

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BY GREG MERRITT

# THE TOP TIPS FROM 35 PROS TO WATCH IN 2015

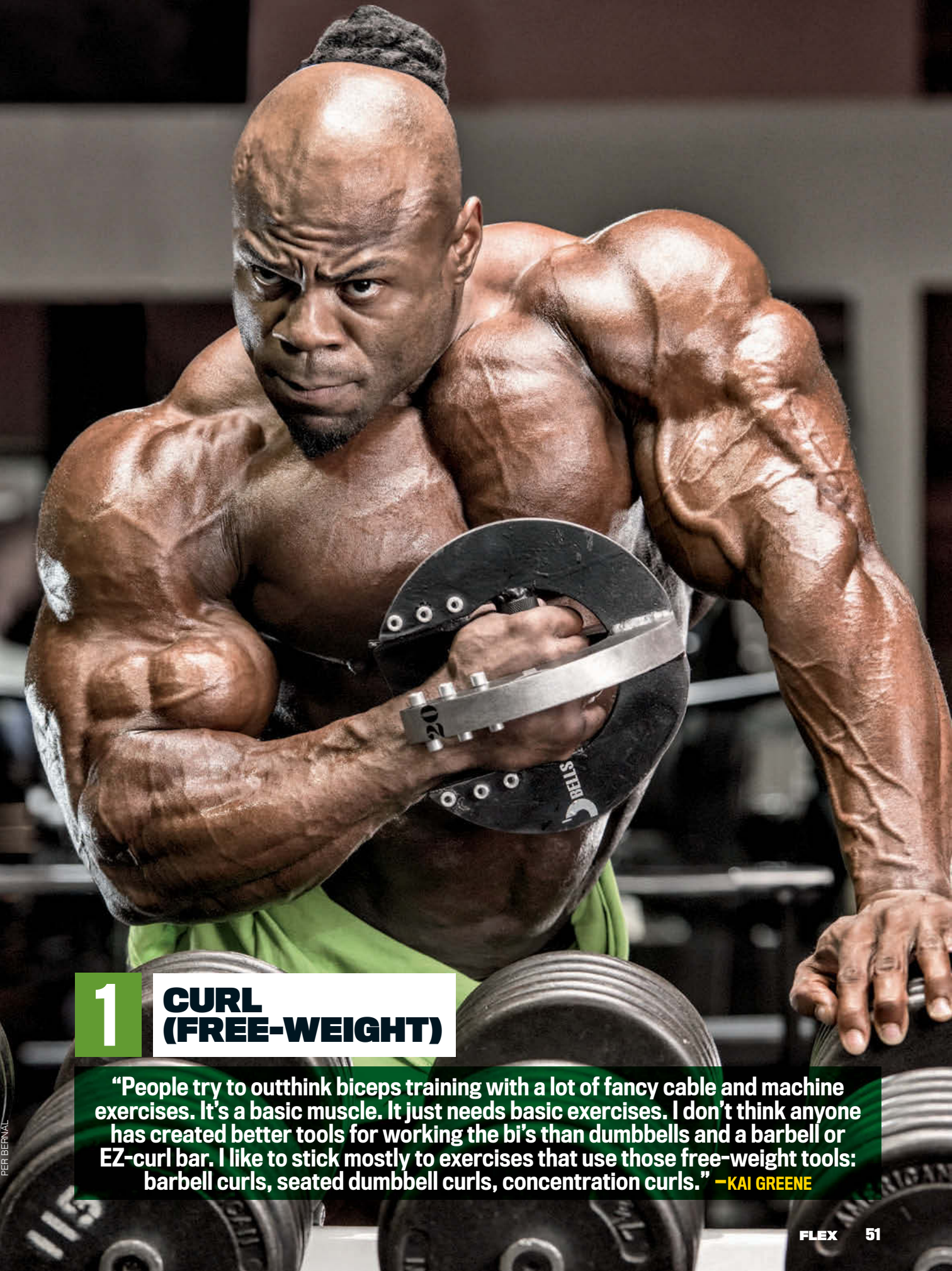
■ If you're dedicated to a muscular lifestyle, it's unlikely you need to do any major recommitting each year. That said, from the rawest beginner to Mr Olympia, everyone can benefit from a course in cutting-edge workout and nutritional advice. That's why we've accumulated 80 top tips from the 35 male bodybuilders most likely to make an impact on IFBB Pro League contests in 2015. These legends and future legends serve up their most effective exercise techniques, body-part routines, nutritional strategies, motivators, and more. Use these 80 tips to recharge your muscle-maximising programme throughout the year.

---

## GREENE DAY?

A whopping 25 of our tips are supplied by Kai Greene. We've directed the spotlight at K.G. because this is a watershed year for the world's No. 2 bodybuilder. He turns 40 on July 12. Only four of the 50 Olympia contests have been won by men in their fifth decades. What's more, Greene has been second in the O the past three years. Jay Cutler is the only other man to do an O runner-up hat-trick, and he subsequently won four Sandows. No one has ever remained heir apparent four consecutive years. After last year's volatile Olympia press conference and prejudging, all eyes will once again be on Greene.





1

## CURL (FREE-WEIGHT)

“People try to outthink biceps training with a lot of fancy cable and machine exercises. It’s a basic muscle. It just needs basic exercises. I don’t think anyone has created better tools for working the bi’s than dumbbells and a barbell or EZ-curl bar. I like to stick mostly to exercises that use those free-weight tools: barbell curls, seated dumbbell curls, concentration curls.” —KAI GREENE



**2**

## SAMI AL HADDAD'S ABS ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Machine Crunch	3	15-20
Leg Raise	3	15-20
Rope Crunch	3	15-20

**3**

## BACK EXTENSION

"With back extensions, I sometimes do them the traditional way, with my hands across my chest, but I usually do them with a reach and a squeeze. What I do is I reach as far down and forward as I can at the bottom, then I bring my arms back as I rise, so at the top my elbows are back and I'm contracting my lower lats as well as my erectors. It's the same movement I make when I start my lat spread." —FLEX LEWIS



**4**



## EDUARDO CORREA'S BACK ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
T-bar Row	5	12
Hammer Strength Row (parallel grip)	3	10-12
One-arm Dumbbell Row	4	12
V-bar Pulldown	4	12
Hammer Strength Row (reverse grip)	3	15
Stiff-arm Pulldown	4	15



## 5 BARBELL ROW

"I love barbell rows. There have been back workouts where I've done nothing but 10-12 sets of barbell rows. I do these the old-school way—like Arnold and Lee Haney—with my back parallel to the floor. This is the hard way, and it forces my lats to engage more." —EVAN CENTOPANI

**6**

## BEEF

"To say I eat a lot of beef in the off-season would be an understatement. There were times when I ate three and a half to four kilos of red meat every day, and my protein intake was as high as 850 grams per day. Beef has always been anabolic for me, much more so than eggs or chicken. And I'm allergic to lactose, so I avoid dairy. As I get closer to a contest, I cut back because of its higher fat content. But for most of the year red meat, whether from steaks or a beef-based protein powder, is the food that I use for muscle growth." —KAI GREENE



## 7 Behind-the-neck press

"The year that I turned pro I was speaking with Kevin Levrone and he told me that the best exercise for getting my shoulders to catch up with my legs was behind-the-neck presses. I usually start with a few exercises to get my shoulders loose and then go over to the Smith machine. I like that I can control the movement easier with the Smith, because free-weight, behind-the-neck presses can be tough on the rotator cuffs if you get out of the exercise's groove." —SHAWN RHODEN

KEVIN HORTON; ISAAC HINDS; PER BERNAL; PAVEL YTHUALL;



# 8 BELT

"For squats, of course I use a belt, and on back day I always have a belt on. But the only other time I might use a belt is on some chest exercises, like incline presses, because I notice I can distend my waist a bit too much if I don't wear a belt." —PHIL HEATH



# 9

## BENCH PRESS (BARBELL)

"I've always done barbell bench presses and barbell incline presses, and I still do them. Bench presses were what built the chests of Arnold Schwarzenegger and Franco Columbu and Lee Haney. They never had any pec tears or any major injuries. I think there's a certain quality of muscle, a certain density, that only comes from basic exercises like bench presses." —KAI GREENE

# 10 BENCH PRESS (DUMBBELL)

"When it comes to chest presses, sometimes I use barbells or machines. But mostly I use dumbbells. I feel dumbbells give me better mobility, and they stimulate more muscle growth because of the longer range of motion." —EDUARDO CORREA

# 11

## KAI GREENE'S BREAKFAST

• 225 g steak • 6 egg whites and 2 whole eggs • 175-350 g porridge, grits, or semolina

# 12 DEXTER JACKSON'S BICEPS ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
EZ-bar Curl	4	8-10
Hammer Curl	4	8-10
Preacher Curl	4	8-10



# 13 CALVES

"You can really go medieval on your calves while just using your body weight. This lets you focus on the stretches and contractions for as long as you can stand the pain. I'll alternate extreme stretches and contractions with regular sets of weighted raises." —FLEX LEWIS

14

## CEDRIC McMILLAN'S CALF ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Seated Calf Raise	3	12-30
Standing Calf Raise	3	12-30



**15 CALORIES** "Off-season, I aim for 7,500 calories a day to get enough nutrients to grow. I never eat true junk food, even then. When I kick in my diet, I cut back to 3,500 to 4,000 calories a day. That primes my metabolism for fat loss. Then I can get back up to 5,000 calories a day for most of my prep, which is less about cutting calories and more about cutting carbs." —JUSTIN COMPTON



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## 16 CARDIO (HIIT)

"For cardio, I do high-intensity interval training [HIIT], alternating periods of lower intensity with periods of higher intensity. I use it a lot during my Mr Olympia contest prep when I'm on the incline treadmill. I'll alternate between two minutes of running and two minutes of brisk walking for the whole session. The sessions are 30 to 60 minutes long, so, obviously, there's going to be a lot of integral periods in there, switching back and forth."

—PHIL HEATH



**17 CARDIO (TIMING)** "I like cardio first thing in the morning and/or at night before bed. Post-workout is tough because it's very draining and it leaves you waiting too long between meals. After intense training, the longer you delay eating the more you compromise your recovery and growth. If you do cardio after hitting the weights, make sure you drink a whey isolate shake before the cardio to start feeding your muscles."

—EVAN CENTOPANI



**18 CARDIO (WALKING)** "I don't like the treadmill. I prefer to do my cardio outside with road walking. I alternate between a fast pace and a slower pace. I'll do that for 20 minutes every other day in the off-season. At the height of my contest prep, I might do 40 minutes in the morning and 20-30 minutes at night."

—FLEX LEWIS



## 19

### CHEST (PRE-EXHAUST)

"My shoulders were taking over on my chest presses. So now I focus mostly on isolation exercises for chest, and I do those first. I do two or three sets of pec-deck flyes and two or three sets of cable crossovers, all to failure. I hold the contractions on the final reps for 30 seconds. Only then do I do one or two sets of incline presses to failure with 20 or more reps."

—CEDRIC MCMILLAN



## 20

### CHEST (SUPERSET)

"I finish off my chest by supersetting dips and pushups, going to failure on each. I'll do three of these body-weight supersets to make sure I've put everything I can into my chest workout and end with a maximum pec pump."

—SHAWN RHODEN



## BRANDON CURRY'S CHEST ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Smith Machine Incline Press	4	10-12
Barbell Decline Press	3	12-15
Pec-deck Flye	2	12-15
Cable Crossover	2	12-15

## 22 CURL (CABLE)

"I do cable curls hammer style with my thumbs up and little fingers down. This helps me hit my biceps, brachialis, and forearms together. I make sure I get a good squeeze at the top and a nice stretch at the bottom."

—SHAWN RHODEN



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**23**

## DRAG CURL

"With barbell curls, I feel more of a contraction in my bi's when I do a drag curl—I just keep the bar close to my body and raise it up. But I'll do it the regular way too. I will sometimes do 10 reps of drag curls and five reps of more normal barbell curls with the bar arcing out away from my body. With drag curls, I don't get as much of the negative movement. I feel that more with regular curls. So I like to do both styles." —KAI GREENE



**26**

**DROP SETS** "My favourite technique for upping the intensity is dropsets. I do those whenever I feel I need them to get the best out of a workout. I'll start with one weight, get as many reps as I can, lighten the weight, get as many reps as I can, then lighten the weight again and get as many reps as I can." —DENNIS WOLF



**27**

**EGGS** "Most people think of eggs as a breakfast food. And I have whole eggs and egg whites, three of each, with my first meal. But I also like eggs for my last meal of the day. I have two whole eggs and nine egg whites with mixed peppers for my last meal before bed." —WILLIAM BONAC



**24** DEADLIFT

"I do deads off the floor last in my back routine. That way, I don't have to go heavy, and I feel it ties my entire back together. You can feel it more in your upper back if you do deads after all your pulldowns and rows. Also, I try not to do less than 10 reps. So I'm not using super-heavy weights, but it's going to feel heavy when you do deads last."

—VICTOR MARTINEZ

## 25 DIP

"I started wearing the heavy powerlifting chains draped over my neck when I dip because I like how it pulls me forwards. To hit your chest you need to lean into the stretch. Chains around your neck force you to do that, as opposed to a dumbbell hanging from a belt around your waist, which pulls you down instead of forwards. Also it's easier to shed chains for drop sets. I'll start with three chains and keep dropping them until it's just my body weight."

—BRANCH WARREN



JASON BREEZE; PER BERNAL; BILL COMSTOCK; KEVIN HORTON; PER BERNAL





## 28 EXPERIMENTATION

"I do a unique chest press with the foot pad on an assisted pull-up/dip machine. I'm not afraid to experiment in the gym. I might be quiet during a workout because I'm focused, but I'm always watching what other people are doing and how they're doing it. I'll watch someone doing pull-ups, and I'll think I can use that to hit my lower chest."

—MAX CHARLES



## 29 FATS (GOOD)

In the off-season I make sure I get enough good fats. I have one teaspoon of all-natural almond butter or peanut butter with both my first and last meals of the day."

—SHAWN RHODEN

**30 BAD FATS** "I have to be careful to keep fats in my diet in the off-season. I'm talking about the so-called bad fats of non-lean beef and pork, also egg yolks, and on occasion fried foods. Fat keeps my metabolism running at its peak. When I've eaten too clean in the off-season before, I lost weight that I needed to help me build muscle and grow."

—JUAN MOREL



**31 FISH** "Pre-contest, I highly recommend eating panga fillet. I eat about two pounds of it a day during my diet. I sprinkle it with just a little red pepper and then lightly sauté it in olive oil. Off-season I'd recommend red snapper or salmon. Both are more flavourful than white fish with lots of good fats."

—ROELLY WINKLAAR

## 32 FOOD BUDGET

"Know what you can afford. You have to be resourceful and write it down and budget it out. Ask yourself 'If I have to eat at least four or five times a day, what can I afford?' Too many guys want to buy the supplements first before the groceries. They'll say 'I don't have money for food.' And I'll ask them what they eat, and they'll give me a long list of supplements. If Arnold and those guys got big on food, why can't you? Supplements are important, but food comes first."

—PHIL HEATH

## 33

## KAI GREENE'S FOREARM ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Reverse Curl	4	10-12
Wrist Curl	4	10-12



## 34 FRONT RAISE

"A unique exercise I do for front delts is a barbell raise with an EZ-curl bar, taking a close, underhand grip. I raise from arms-down to where the bar is at forehead-level on every rep. And I keep my arms just slightly bent."

—ESSA OBAÏD



**35 FRONT SQUAT** "I like to do front squats instead of back squats. They take a lot of the stress out of my back and my shoulders because I don't have to pull my shoulders back to balance the bar behind me. And I just feel front squats focus more on my quads than back squats. I do these after leg extensions so I don't have to go heavy." —JOSE RAYMOND



**36 GIANT SET** "In my Crazy 8 routine, I do eight exercises for a body part in a giant set. I do one set of each exercise, and I don't rest until I've done all eight exercises.

Then I rest four minutes and do it again. I do three of these eight-exercise giant sets per body part. The key is to use challenging weights and get 10-12 reps per exercise. Don't just do light, pump sets. You need to push yourself to the limit throughout." —STEVE KUCLO



**37 GLUTES** "Don't avoid an exercise just because it sounds girly. I do step-ups, lunges, and the glute-ham raise. I'll put one of those in every leg workout. Glute separation often decides contests, so it's an area you need to train just like every other."

—AARON CLARK



**38**

## GRIP

"I switch between T-bar rows and barbell rows for back. And I also switch my grip. One workout I'll do barbell rows with an overhand grip and the next time I'll use an underhand grip. Changing your grip with back exercises changes how the exercises hit your muscles."

—MAMDOUH ELSSBIAY

**39**

## KAI GREENE'S HAMSTRINGS WORKOUT

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Standing One-leg Curl	3	20
Stiff-leg Deadlift	4	20
Lying Leg Curl	3	20

**40**

## HIGH REPS

"For most body parts I keep my reps in the 10-15 range. But with triceps I go higher.

My sets for triceps exercises—whether pushdowns, extensions, or weighted dips—are all in the 15-20 range. I just feel higher reps work best for tri's. It certainly gives you a good pump. And it also protects my elbow joints from the heavier weights I'd use with lower reps."

—JON DELAROSA



# 41 JEFFERSON SQUAT

"I do Jefferson squats. It's an old movement. You don't see many people do these any more. But I think it's an excellent movement because it works your lower body in a unique way. Take a wide stance and hold the bar between your legs with one hand in front of your body and one hand behind. Keep your glutes tensed the whole time while you squat down. Use smaller plates on the bar—no more than 25s—so you can get down deep enough. The key is to force your knees out. Forcing your knees out will activate your glutes, so you keep them under continuous contraction throughout the set." —KAI GREENE



## 42 LOW-CABLE ROW

"Charles Glass taught me a unique way to do these.

I sit up higher on a box, so I pull the handle up and into my lower abdomen. I also use a handle that has a parallel-grip at about shoulder width. These little things make a big difference, because I can get my elbows back farther to really feel it in my lower lats."

—ESSA OBIAD



## 43 MASSAGE

"Deep tissue massage is key for opening and lengthening the muscles and breaking up the scar tissue within the muscles. Overall, it's excellent for recovery and growth, but it also increases my mobility for doing exercises and hitting poses correctly."

—STEVE KUCLO

## 44 DENNIS WOLF'S OFF-SEASON MEAL PLAN

**Meal 1** 100 g whey, 80 g porridge oats, banana

**Meal 2** 40 g whey (post-workout)

**Meal 3** 285 g chicken breast, 100 g brown rice

**Meal 4** 400 g salmon, 100 g brown rice

**Meal 5** 285 g steak, 100 g brown rice

**Meal 6** 285 g chicken breast, 285 g sweet potato

**Meal 7** 80g whey



## 45 MEAL VARIETY

"When a meal plan says chicken or turkey or whatever, that doesn't mean you have to eat a plain chicken breast or plain turkey. There are an almost endless number of ways to prepare those foods that don't add a lot of fat or simple carbs. You can have turkey chilli or barbecued chicken or hundreds of other things. And if you're trying to gain size, you don't have to eat super clean. It's not even beneficial. You need extra calories to grow."

—PHIL HEATH

## 46 JOSE RAYMOND'S PRE-CONTEST MEAL PLAN

**Meal 1** 225 g bison, 240 ml egg whites, 80 g ground rice

**Meal 2** 285 g chicken, asparagus

**Meal 3** 285 g orange roughly, 200 g brown rice

**Meal 4** 50g whey (post-workout)

**Meal 5** 285 g tuna, broccoli

**Meal 6** 60g casein



## 47 MOTIVATION (MANTRA)

"The phrase "push harder" motivates me. I say it over and over to myself. It

means so many things to me—in bodybuilding but also just in life in general. We all face adversities every single day, and always there are two options: easy or hard. I deal with this in every workout. The choice is: do I go half-hearted or do I go balls-to-the-wall?" —FLEX LEWIS

## 48

### SELF-MOTIVATION

"Recognise that this journey can be very lonely. You need to be willing to accept that. This isn't like being on a team. You can have advisors or coaches, but your team is you. Your path to personal excellence is going to be rough and winding sometimes. You have to get beyond average thinking and average results and tap into that other place—that place where your better self and your levels of personal genius lie. Only you can do that."

—KAI GREENE



## 49 NECK

"Early on I always trained my neck. Even now I sometimes do. I think

it gives your body a complete look. I do one or two giant sets on a neck machine, working all four directions—front, back, left, and right—in rotation for 20–30 reps per side."

—HIDETADA YAMAGISHI



## 50 ONE-ARM DUMBBELL ROW

"There are different ways of doing one-arm

dumbbell rows. You can pull the weight straight up, and that way you can use the most weight. You can pull the weight up but also from forwards to back. You can't use as much weight, but it's a longer range of motion. And you can pull the weight up but also across your body from the opposite side. In the first two your palm faces your side. In the last one your palm faces back, and you're really trying to get that long range of motion. You can't use as much weight, but you really feel that stretch and contraction. I do these all three ways, sometimes in the same workout."

—CHARLES DIXON

## 51

### OVERHEAD LATERAL

"Overhead laterals start where regular side laterals end, with the dumbbells at shoulder level. Then you take them up overhead so they nearly touch. You have to use lighter dumbbells, but it forces you to keep the muscles tense. I take a palms-facing grip and keep my arms slightly bent. Your arms travel in a wide arc, unlike a press." —ROELLY WINKLAAR



## 52

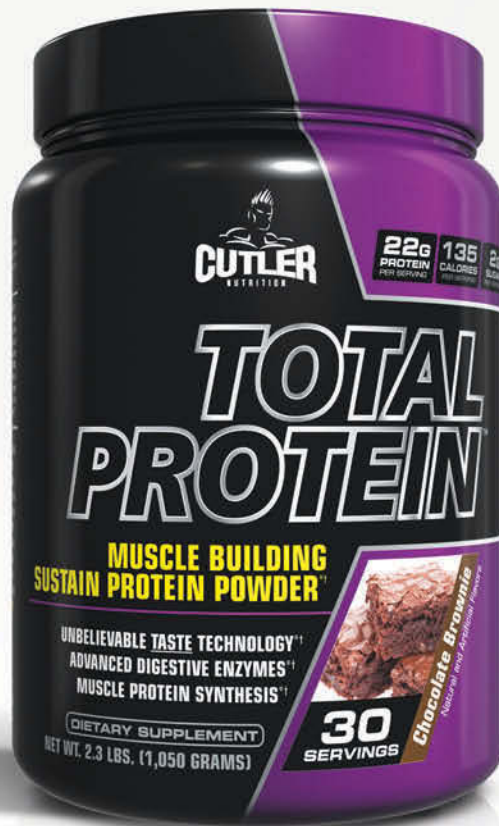
### ONE-ARM PULLDOWN

"I do a one-arm pulldown kneeling in a cable-crossover station. This allows me to get a longer range of motion and pull my hand from the opposite side of my head to where my elbow is tucked down at my side. It feels totally different from any other pulldown, and, of course, it lets me work each side in isolation." —BAITOLLAH ABBASPOUR

GREGORY JAMES; BILL COMSTOCK (3)



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**TRAIN LIKE A PRO**



**53 ONE-LEG PRESS** “Try one-leg presses for five sets of 8–10 reps. You can really isolate each leg by doing them separately and taking the weight all the way down for a wider range of motion.” —**LIONEL BEYEKE**



**54 OVERTRAINING** “New research shows that overtraining is as likely as winning the lottery. Overtraining is a state that exists systemically throughout your entire body, not within one muscle. It’s a chronic condition that affects your nervous, endocrine, and muscular systems. As long as you’re giving your body adequate rest and time to recover, overtraining shouldn’t even be a thought.” —**BEN PAKULSKI**

**55**

## ONE-LEG HACK SQUAT

“The one-leg hack squat is one of those creations Charles [Glass] came up with. You’re basically sideways in the hack machine in a lunging position. It feels like a lunge. You’re going to hit the glutes, but I also feel it a lot in my outer quads.” —**DEXTER JACKSON**

**56**

## PARTNER

“Training partners are not essential. A lot of bodybuilding you have to do on your own. When you do have a training partner with you who is in tune with what you’re trying to accomplish, it can be a wonderful vehicle to help you. But when you don’t have it, you’re still going to have to be accountable for reaching your goals.” —**KAI GREENE**

## 57 POWER BODYBUILDING

“Power bodybuilding increases your size and strength by combining powerlifting and bodybuilding. I don’t separate the two. In my training, they’re one and the same. My objective on every set is to lift as much weight as possible for as many reps as possible. It’s very simple. Lift heavier to get bigger.”

—**JOHNNIE JACKSON**



CHRIS LUND; PER BERNAL (2)





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# 58 PROTEIN

"I go through phases where I eat primarily one type of protein. I guess it's easier for me to focus my meals that way. I used to love chicken breasts, so I was eating, like, 10 or more chicken breasts a day. And then for a while I felt my body responded a lot better to chicken drumsticks, believe it or not. So I used to eat massive amounts of drumsticks. And then I went through my fish phase, tilapia and orange roughly. I was eating lots of lean fish every day. Right now, I eat more steak, and I also get my protein from red meat protein powders." —KAI GREENE



**60 PULL-UP** "I love to do body-weight pull-ups at the start of my back workout. I take a wide grip at the ends of the angled parts of a pull-up bar, and I make sure I get good stretches and contractions. I just feel like this opens up my shoulders and lats and lets me better target my back with the rows and pulldowns that follow."

—KEVIN JORDAN



## 61 PUSHDOWN

"I prefer to use a rope on pushdowns to get more tension in the muscle. I separate the ropes at contractions and hold and squeeze for a second." —PHIL HEATH

**62**

## BRANCH WARREN'S QUAD WORKOUT

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Leg Extension	5	20*
Squat	5	10
Hack Squat	5	15
Leg Press	4	20*
Smith Machine Lunge	3	10

\*Final set is a dropset with three stages.

JASON BREEZE (2); ISAAC HINDS

# 59 PULLOVER

"There are some things I do for back that most bodybuilders don't do. One of those things is pullovers. I'll do pullovers first in my routine to pre-exhaust my back. Pullovers are an exercise that doesn't involve elbow movement. I'll do these on a Nautilus pullover machine or at a pulldown station with straight arms first, and then move on to pulldowns and rows—exercises that work the back but also involve the arms." —KAI GREENE





**63 QUINOA** "Rice used to be a staple in my diet, but I switched to quinoa.

Quinoa has been just as easy to mix with my foods, easier to digest, and just as easy to cook in a steamer. The carb count is approximately the same as rice, but quinoa is a complete protein, with about 5 grams per 100 grams, so it was a no-brainer to switch."

—FOUAD ABIAD

**64**



## REP RANGE

"I never get too fancy with the rep range and try to outthink what's been proven to work. Science tells us 8-12 reps per set is best, so that's what I aim for. I'm usually going for 10, but I might get a little less or more. Either way, I know it'll be in that 8-12 range." —DENNIS WOLF



**65 REST PERIODS** "I use my breath to gauge my rest periods. I rest between sets until

my breath goes back to normal, and then it's time to go back to work on my next set." —MAMDOUH ELSSBIAY

**66**

## ROELLY WINKLAAR'S SHOULDER ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Hammer Strength Shoulder Press	3	10-12
Seated Dumbbell Press	4	12
Lateral Raise	3	12
Overhead Lateral	3	12
Dumbbell Shrug	4	10
Bentover Lateral	3	12

**67 STANCE**

"I do hack squats and leg presses almost every workout. What changes is my foot placement. I'll take a wide stance on one and a narrow stance on the other, and the next workout I'll change that. Or I'll put my feet forwards one workout and back under my hips the next." —GUY CISTERNINO



**68 STEAK**

"I love eating minced beef and steaks. I spend more for quality meats. I can eat a 340-450 g steak if it's very tender, because my jaw isn't tired. With a subpar piece of meat, you're going to be playing with that for a while. I get rib eye, fillet steak, and sirloin steak, and usually marinate them in lemon and lime juice and sprinkle them with garlic."

—DAVID HENRY



**69**

## STRAPS

"I use straps on back exercises when I go heavy. With straps, I know my grip won't give out before the muscles I'm trying to target give out. Some people might say you don't want to become too reliant on straps, but for me it's not about having a strong grip. It's all about best targeting the muscles I want to target." —KAI GREENE



## 70 STRETCH

"The stretches I do after my workout are designed to maximise the stretch on the muscles and expand the fascia. They hurt—a lot. They're nothing like the relaxing stretches most people do. Extreme fascia stretches are an extension of the workout, and you have to push yourself through the pain zone." —DAVID HENRY

**71**

## SUPPLEMENTS

"Use supplements as additions. That's what they're supposed to be. If your main worry is what supplements to take, your priorities are probably out of place. If you're not getting enough protein from real foods like fish, chicken, beef, and eggs, and if your workouts are off and you're not getting enough rest between workouts, all those supplements—those additions—are not going to stimulate growth."

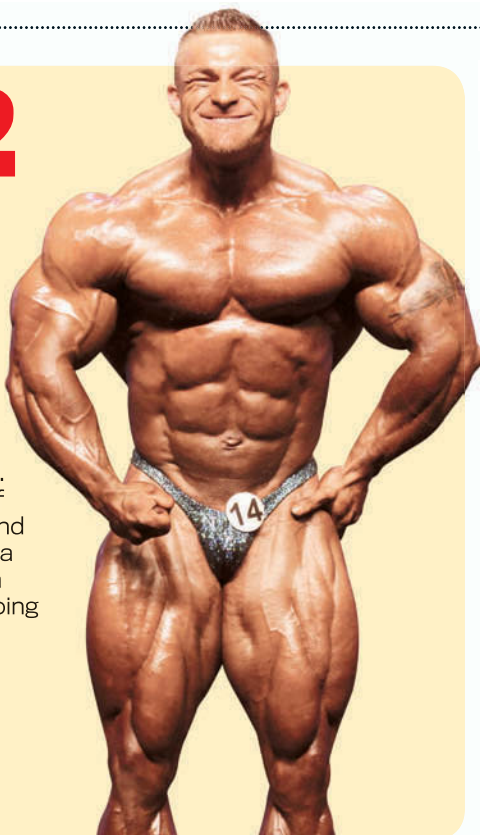
—KAI GREENE

**72**

## SUSHI

"Even pre-contest I can still have what I call a clean cheat meal once per week or so. That's almost always sushi. I just get stuff like salmon and yellowtail tuna sashimi. On a diet I'm not going to have any fried crap or any of those rolls covered with sauces or anything like that."

—FLEX LEWIS



## 73 TENSION

"To build muscle you must subject your body to increased tension. One of the best ways to do this is to slow down your reps. If you increase the total time of an eight-rep set from 20 seconds to 40 seconds, you've doubled the tension on the muscles. Another thing to be conscious of is gravity. The weight wants to go straight down. So you may need to change your range of motion so it always moves on a vertical plane and never on a partially parallel plane. For example, tension is lost in the pecs when doing flyes if you bring the dumbbells together at the top." —BEN PAKULSKI

**74**

## TIBIALIS

"Most people don't train the front of their calves, but the tibialis is a beautiful muscle. It gives your lower legs a complete look when viewed from the front. I'll do tibialis raises seated and hanging from a bar, and I don't need weight. It's all about the isometric flexing." —KAI GREENE



## 75 PHIL HEATH'S TILAPIA RECIPE

340 g tilapia · 1 tbsp lemon pepper seasoning · Olive oil cooking spray · 100-200 g chopped broccoli

**Directions:** Spray the tilapia with cooking spray and rub it with the lemon pepper seasoning. Grill the fish. (Sometimes I bake it instead.) Steam the broccoli.





## 76 TRAPS

"For traps, I like to superset shrugs with upright rows. I'll do the shrugs with either dumbbells or a shrug machine so my palms are facing my legs. And with the upright rows, I'll take a shoulder-width grip to hit my side delts with my traps."

—NICK TRIGILI

**77**

## JUAN MOREL'S TRICEPS ROUTINE

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Pushdown	4	20
Close-grip Bench Press	4	10
Kickback	4	12-15
One-arm Dumbbell Extension	4	12-15



## 78 VARIETY

"Variety is very important for stimulating muscle growth. Whether it's off-season or pre-contest, I'm always changing things around. No two workouts are ever exactly the same."

—HIDETADA YAMAGISHI



**79**

## VISUALISATION

"It's a matter of visualising what you want to achieve, and then letting your body achieve what it's capable of achieving. Limitations are only what I believe them to be. The impossible is only impossible until someone comes along and does it."

—KAI GREENE



## 80

**VITAMINS & MINERALS** "I'm big on getting those macros and micros for a healthy body inside and out. I'll have a serving of green vegetables with at least four meals a day, and I also supplement with a multivitamin/mineral and I take extra vitamin C on top of that, too."

A healthy body is a growing body." —TONEY FREEMAN **FLEX**







A close-up photograph of a very muscular arm, likely a bodybuilder's, pulling a metal handle attached to a cable on a red gym machine. The arm is highly defined, showing the bicep, forearm, and hand muscles. The background is slightly blurred, showing other gym equipment.

BY DAVID SANDLER

**THIS IS YOUR**

**BIG**

**BUILD ROCK-SOLID MASS  
AND GET  
RIPPED!**

**YEAR**

**It comes every year:** a new programme, the promise of a new you. So why is this one any different? Rather than giving you the same ol' same ol', this programme turns up the pace and inverts the exercise list to attack the muscles differently from how they have been in the past. The principles behind muscle strength and size development haven't changed. It's physiology. Muscle responds and adapts to the stress you place on it. That is fact and does not change. That means that you still want to crush big weights and do plenty of volume, as that is the impetus for true muscle remodelling. But the approach for the new muscle programme is in the exercise order, grouping, and selection. This programme targets the "for show" muscles first, then works backwards through the chain to get the entire body developed.

# STRONG, BIG & LEAN

■ Traditionally, when one is looking to get lean, it is common to lose some muscle along the way. However, with a little ingenuity you can build muscle, get lean, and show that rock-solid physique in short time. Here's how:

**1. Fuel your body at the right time with the right nutrients while also making sure you target the muscles that will add thickness and size to your frame. That means big back, big chest, big legs, and heavy-duty mass-building exercises are coupled with a serious volume-loaded programme and a tight diet.**

**2. Strength is your ability to move big weight. Getting big is about hitting muscles from every angle with lots of reps and sets. And getting lean is about keeping your mouth shut at the right time. This programme will allow you to do all those things, and since volume will be up and activity will be at quite a high level, you will be able to take in a few more calories than your normally restricted competition diet.**

## DAY 1

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST
<b>Chest</b>			
Dumbbell Flye	4	12	90 sec.
Cable Crossover	4	12	90 sec.
Wide-grip Bench Press	5	6	2½ min.
Incline Dumbbell Press	4	8	2½ min.
<b>Shoulders</b>			
Cable Lateral Raise	4	12	90 sec.
Dumbbell Front Raise	4	12	90 sec.
Smith Machine Shoulder Press	5	6	2½ min.
Dumbbell Press	4	8	2 min.
<b>Abs</b>			
Decline Sit-up	4	12	90 sec.
Rope-Cable Crunch	4	12	90 sec.

**3. You will pitch in a little cardio here and there, but it, too, will vary week by week—along with your evolving training routine.**

**4. And last, but certainly not least, we have provided the ultimate stack solution for your training to guide your muscle gains at every corner.**

### THE SPLIT

You've heard the saying that the devil is in the details. In this case, that means that the success of this programme is in how you manage your training sessions. You will hit four days on, one day off. While an "on-off" routine is nothing new, the unique thing about this programme is that when you go back on, you will start right where you left off. That means that if you started the week with the chest, you will hit it again on Saturday, making the following Monday a leg day. That'll be nice when you hit the gym and find that you don't have to line up and wait for a bench, but more importantly, the variation will keep your body evolving, playing catch-up in a game that it knows well. Thus, rather than trying to confuse your muscles with completely different exercises and workouts, you will cycle your training by body part and hit that routine when it comes up, not by day but by body part. This method helps reset your body and allows it to take advantage of recovery through its own natural processes.

## WEEKS 1-4

### THE FOCUS

Building muscle.

Do not concern yourself with strength, which for many of us is hard to do. Try it. Your strength will improve, but you may not see it in your big lifts, such as your bench and squat, until later in the programme.

### THE METHOD

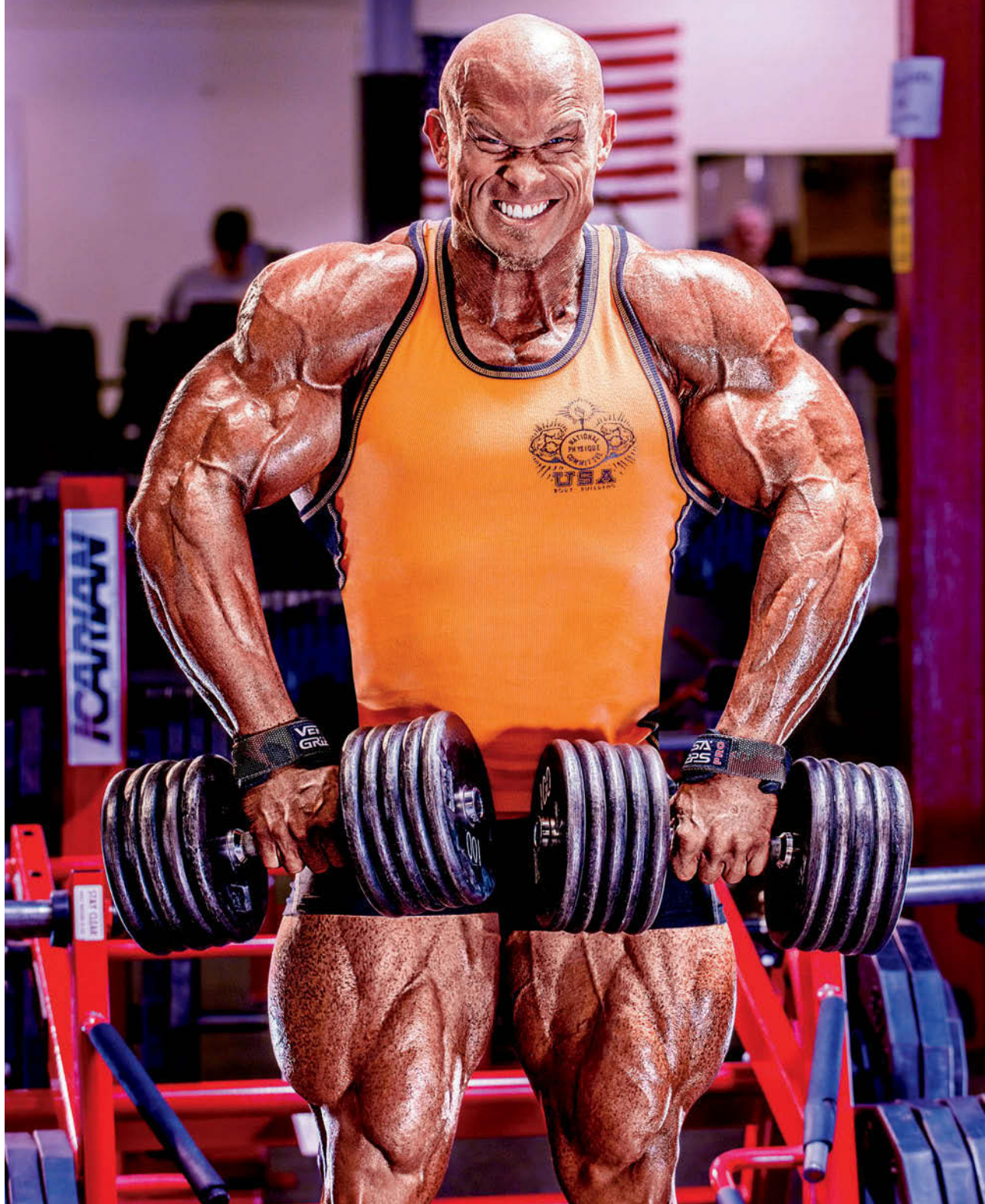
Do your muscle-building exercises first and the strength exercises after, which, intuitively, is not the "proper" way to work out. This will target specific muscles and maximise your overall gains from each training session.

### POINTS TO REMEMBER

This programme will take you out of your normal routine and give you more volume by not worrying about hitting your chest on Monday, back on Tuesday, and so on. By the end of the eight-week programme, you'll have hit each muscle group with more reps and sets than you have done in your 10 previous weeks, all while getting lean doing it.

The inability to recover means that after a few weeks of hitting six-plus workouts per week, you simply stop growing. This split will keep you pushing hard, heavy, and with high volume for eight weeks and, for some, even longer.





## WHAT DOES THE SCIENCE SAY?

Who cares? This works! OK, seriously, we do care but most people do not, provided they see big results. Truthfully, this would be a hard programme to test in a true head-to-head experiment. But to recap the thinking behind this programme, we have kept rest per body part at a premium, meaning that we should recover. We have addressed the strength component that helps lay down foundational muscle. And we have pushed the volume limits, improving our chances of releasing the major hormones that fuel muscle-size development. But to help fortify your gains, the supplement stack takes muscle-building and recovery into consideration and even allows you to get a serious pump while doing it.

CHARLES LOWTHIAN

## DAY 2

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST
<b>Back</b>			
Straight-arm Pulldown	4	12	90 sec.
Chin-up (close-grip, palms in)	4	12	90 sec.
Seated Wide Row	4	10	2 min.
Wide-grip Lat Pulldown	4	8	2 min.
Dumbbell Row	4	8	2 min.
<b>Traps</b>			
Dumbbell Rear Lateral	4	12	90 sec.
Dumbbell Shrug	4	10	2 min.
Upright Row	4	10	2 min.
<b>Calves</b>			
Seated Calf Raise	4	10	90 sec.
Standing Calf Raise	4	10	90 sec.

**DO YOUR MUSCLE-BUILDING EXERCISES FIRST AND YOUR STRENGTH EXERCISES AFTER TO MAXIMISE OVERALL GAINS.**



**Toney Freeman focuses for a set of straight-arm pulldowns.**

## DAY 3

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST
<b>Legs</b>			
Smith Machine Lunge	4	12	90 sec.
Leg Extension	4	12	90 sec.
Leg Press	4	10	2 min.
Hack Squat	4	8	2 min.
Squat	4	8	3 min.
Single-leg Curl	4	10	2½ min.
Lying Leg Curl	4	8	2½ min.
Glute-Ham Raise	4	10	2 min.
Straight-leg Deadlift	4	12	90 sec.

## DAY 4

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST
<b>Biceps</b>			
Single-arm Cable Curl	4	12	90 sec.
Single-arm Dumbbell Curl	4	8	2 min.
Barbell Preacher Curl	4	12	90 sec.
Barbell Curl	4	12	90 sec.
<b>Triceps</b>			
Single-arm Pushdown	4	8	2 min.
Overhead Dumbbell Extension	4	12	90 sec.
Skull Crusher	4	12	90 sec.
Close-grip Bench Press	4	12	90 sec.



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**WEEKS  
5-8****THE FOCUS**

Still building muscle, but shift your priority to compound exercises.

**THE METHOD**

Flip everything and do the same exercises from weeks 1-4 but in reverse order. Additionally, you will get to nail your arms a few times per week, bringing out some serious size for the gun show.

**POINTS TO  
REMEMBER**

Maximise available time by getting into the gym more frequently, which forces you to hit muscles more fully. For those used to cycling training between strength-building and volume- or size-building, there will be no need to cycle—you will do both in the same workout.

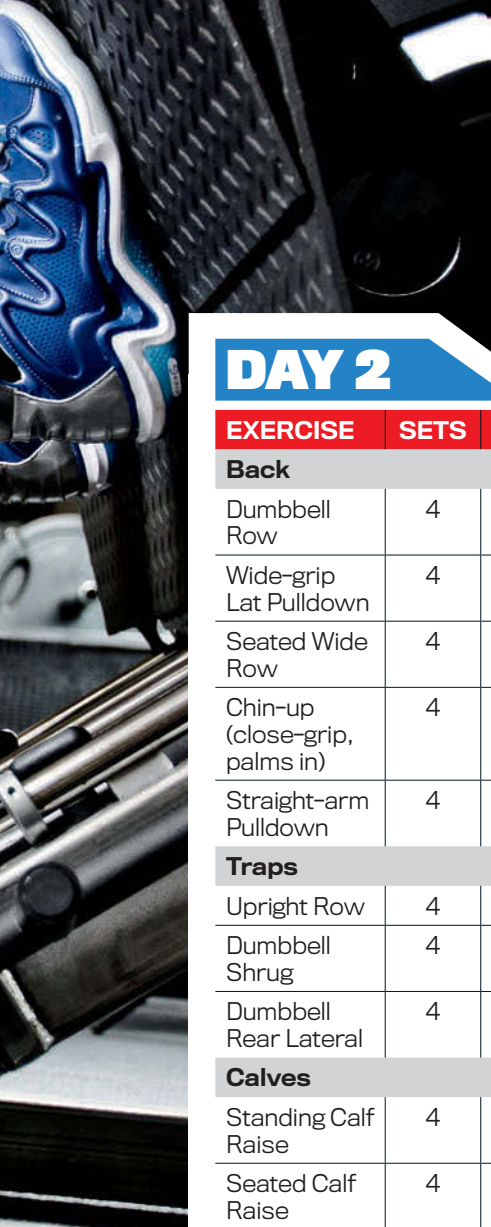
**GETTING BIG  
IS ABOUT  
HITTING YOUR  
MUSCLES  
FROM EVERY  
ANGLE WITH  
LOTS OF SETS  
AND REPS.**

**DAY 1**

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST
<b>Chest</b>			
Incline Dumbbell Press	4	12	90 sec.
Wide-grip Bench Press	4	12	90 sec.
Cable Crossover	5	6	2½ min.
Dumbbell Flye	4	8	2½ min.
<b>Shoulders</b>			
Dumbbell Press	4	12	90 sec.
Smith Machine Press	4	12	90 sec.
Dumbbell Front Raise	5	6	2½ min.
Cable Lateral Raise	4	8	2 min.
<b>Abs</b>			
Rope-Cable Crunch	4	12	90 sec.
Decline Sit-up	4	12	90 sec.

JASON BREEZE





## DAY 2

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST
<b>Back</b>			
Dumbbell Row	4	12	90 sec.
Wide-grip Lat Pulldown	4	12	90 sec.
Seated Wide Row	4	10	2 min.
Chin-up (close-grip, palms in)	4	8	2 min.
Straight-arm Pulldown	4	8	2 min.
<b>Traps</b>			
Upright Row	4	12	90 sec.
Dumbbell Shrug	4	10	2 min.
Dumbbell Rear Lateral	4	10	2 min.
<b>Calves</b>			
Standing Calf Raise	4	10	90 sec.
Seated Calf Raise	4	10	90 sec.

## DAY 3

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST
<b>Legs</b>			
Squat	4	12	3 min.
Hack Squat	4	10	2 min.
Leg Press	4	8	2 min.
Leg Extension	4	8	90 sec.
Smith Machine Lunge	4	10	90 sec.
Straight-leg Deadlift	4	12	2½ min.
Glute-Ham Raise	4	8	2½ min.
Lying Leg Curl	4	10	2 min.
Single-leg Curl	4	12	90 sec.

## DAY 4

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS	REST
<b>Biceps</b>			
Barbell Curl	4	12	90 sec.
Barbell Preacher Curl	4	8	2 min.
Single-arm Dumbbell Curl	4	12	90 sec.
Single-arm Cable Curl	4	12	90 sec.
<b>Triceps</b>			
Close-grip Bench Press	4	8	2 min.
Skull Crusher	4	8	2 min.
Overhead Dumbbell Extension	4	12	90 sec.
Single-arm Pushdown	4	12	90 sec.
Pushdown	4	12	90 sec.

# ALTERNATING CARDIO FOR INCREASED FAT BURNING

■ Your cardio sessions will alternate after every fourth training session. You'll start by doing cardio before you work out for your first four sessions, then do cardio post-workout for the next four sessions, and then alternate back. Your pre-workout cardio will be 20-30 minutes at a low and slow pace to get you warmed up and get the fat-burning process ignited. Shoot for a heart rate that does not exceed 135 but preferably sits at 115—something manageable. This will vary by person and level of fitness, but the intent is to hit around 60% of your age-adjusted (220 minus age) heart rate max. The post-workout cardio sessions will be a high-intensity battle with what little energy you'll have left from your heavy-duty training session. You'll go hard for 30 seconds to a minute, then slow down for 1-2 minutes, alternating back and forth in

interval fashion. At the high end, you want to push your heart rate to its manageable limit. Then slow down so your heart rate goes down below 130 before you push it back up. This alternating activity will not only burn big calories but also improve your body's metabolic burning rate for the long haul.

## CARDIO CORNER

WHEN	DURATION	INTENSITY LEVEL
Pre-workout	20-30	Slow and steady
Post-workout	20-30	High-intensity interval

Alternate between pre-workout and post-workout every four workouts.



## THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO IS FUEL YOUR BODY FOR YOUR WORKOUT.

your body is starving for some good nutrients. Probably your muscles are looking for some loving as well. To get things rolling, you need to grab a good breakfast, one that is high in protein but also has some fat and carbs to round out the meal. With some extra help from a good supplement stack, you can keep your muscles growing by giving your body that push it needs.

**Take:** Multivitamin, fish oil, joint formula, protein (20–30 g).

### CARDIO COCKTAIL

Most people like to use cardio to burn fat and calories and are often afraid to fuel up right before it. This is a mistake. While cardio has an instant calorie requirement, it also has benefits long after the session is complete. Overall, if you hit a good, fast-paced session, you will improve your metabolic rate on a daily basis that, over time, will help regulate your body's energy and fat-burning processes. Thus, this stack is created for those who are very serious about getting more out of their cardio routines.

**Take:** Caffeine (up to 200 mg), ATP (250 mg), beta-alanine (1.6–2 g).

### EVENING STACK

Before you go to bed and shut down for the day, you need to make sure your muscles have an edge when they hit that nutrient-deprived fast known as sleep. Part of sleeping is to allow your body to work on the finer details, rather than just focusing on building muscle, so to that end, this stack has a little of both.

**Take:** Fish oil, protein blend (including casein and/or plant proteins, 20–30 g). **FLEX**

## THE STACK

■ You can pile your supplements high and swallow everything and probably see some good results. In most cases, more is better, especially with protein, amino acids, creatine, and a few other choice ingredients. The ingredients selected here are chosen because of their ability to help fuel muscle growth, prevent too much muscle damage, and improve your rate of recovery. While stimulants play a big role for many lifters, the truth is that they do little to improve overall muscle quality, hence you will notice that we are not advocating stimulants in your pre-workout matrix. Certainly each of you may have an ingredient you cannot live without, and we are all for that. Placebo or not—and we are not suggesting ingredients that don't appear here only provide a placebo effect—if you like it, take it, and don't let anyone tell you otherwise. **Don't leave anything on the table if it has a chance to help you reach new heights.**

### PRE-WORKOUT

Possibly the most important thing you can do is properly fuel your body

for your workout to give it what it needs to grow. Most people miss this step because of trying to get wired up for their workouts. And while, for some, a jacked-up pre-workout may give an added kick, rarely do any give you what you really need. Stimulants do not help muscles grow. For that reason, we suggest taking a few specific ingredients to fuel muscle-building.

**Take:** Creatine (up to 5 g), BCAAs (at least 5 g with 3 g leucine), Nitrosigine (1 g), citrulline malate or L-citrulline (at least 3 g).

### POST-WORKOUT

The window of growth is at its max during and immediately following your workout, and since protein breakdown is in overdrive, your protein repletion should be right there with it. Additionally, since your muscles have lost some water and other vital nutrients during their hardworking session, they need some help getting back to "normal". It is for these reasons that we suggest the following ingredients for a solid post-workout push.

**Take:** Creatine (up to 5 g), BCAAs (at least 5 g with 3 g leucine), glutamine-alanine combo (5 g), protein (20–30 g).

### MORNING STACK

You've just come off a huge fast, and



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PER BERNAL



# FOUR BY FOUR

**In this FLEX exclusive, former four-time Mr Olympia Jay Cutler talks to four-time reigning Mr Olympia Phil Heath about what it's like being a member of bodybuilding's inner sanctum** BY TONY MONCHINSKI

**EACH MAN** turned pro his first time out: Jay Cutler when he won the heavyweight class at the 1996 NPC Nationals; Phil Heath when he won the heavyweight and overall titles at the 2005 NPC USA. Cutler's ascent up the pro ranks was less auspicious than Heath's: at his pro debut, the '98 Night Of Champions, Cutler landed in 11th, whereas Heath emerged victorious from his first two pro contests. Cutler chased the Sandow longer and harder than anyone: he would place second four times before finally beating eight-time champ Ronnie Coleman. (Over the course of his career, Cutler would set a record with six Olympia runner-ups.) Heath's Olympia ascent had its ups and downs: he placed third, fifth, and second before finally claiming the title in 2011 and has defended it each year since. With his victory last year, Heath joined Cutler as the owner of four Sandows. Here, in a first of its kind, we got the past two Mr Olympias together for an in-depth, no-punches-pulled interview as Cutler sat down with Heath to talk about being four-time Olympia winners, what comes with it, and what leads up to it. As you listen to them, one thing that quickly becomes clear is their mutual admiration and respect for each other and other bodybuilders, their professionalism, and their love of the sport and its fans.

## REACHING FOR THE STARS: ON BEING FOUR-TIME MR OLYMPIAS

**JAY CUTLER:** The best part of being Mr Olympia for four years was being the king. Everywhere I went, the red carpet was rolled out for me. It was great for the ego, but it was bad for some personal relationships. If I could go back and do it over again, I'd try to keep as many personal relationships intact as possible. What's been the best and the toughest part of being a four-time Mr Olympia for you?

**PHIL HEATH:** A great part about winning for the fourth time is knowing that I can always improve and that I'm young enough to do so. Ronnie Coleman won his first Olympia when he was 34. I'm 34 now. But even better than that are all the interactions I've had worldwide with fans. To meet people at guest posings and have them tell me my example helped them go from 120 pounds to a muscular 200, or from an overweight 300 to an in-shape 220 pounds, that's humbling. The year-to-year victories are great in themselves, but, Jay, you know winning only lasts so long before we're talking about the next contest.

**JC:** Let's talk about it then. People can't ask me who I want to win the Olympia, because I'm biased. You're the greatest bodybuilder on that stage now and will continue to be. Honestly, the only person who is going to beat you is you. You're going to have to be careful not to get injured and not focus on getting much bigger. You don't need to.

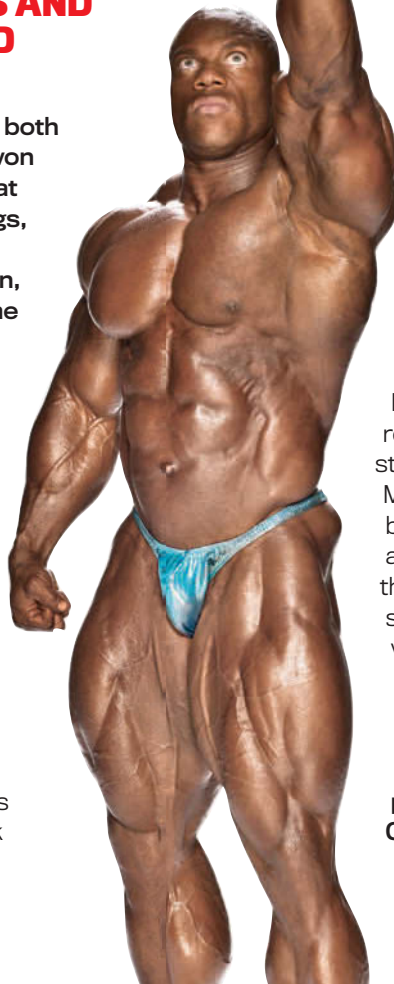
**PH:** If I go on record saying I want to win eight or nine Sandows, there are people who will say I'm arrogant. I don't get why. If you can win, why is it bad? Don't they say to reach for the stars? Well, here I am, reaching for the stars. And why wouldn't I?



## UNDERDOGS AND GREEN-EYED MONSTERS

**JC:** Something we both faced before we won our Olympias is that we were underdogs, and people were rooting for us. Then, after we won, some people seemed to turn against us.

**PH:** Some people pray for your downfall. We even saw it with Lee Haney, and what bad thing could anyone say about that guy? I think it's human nature. After a while, you feel sorry for someone, and you say it'd be nice if this guy won. And I think



on a certain level it gets boring for fans. For spectators it can be like, "Guess Phil's gonna come in and win again." To see the same person win every boxing match or track meet—do we really want to watch that? I mean, the only reason people are still watching Floyd Mayweather is because he sells an actual event, not just the fight. If he didn't say anything, no one would care.

**JC:** I think Kai [Greene] was trying to stir the pot at the last Olympia, and I think





**Far left: Heath and Cutler backstage at the 2014 Olympia. Top: Heath battling Kai Greene at the 2010 Arnold Classic, where Heath finished second to Greene. Left: Things heat up at the 2014 Olympia, with Heath coming out on top.**

I was a threat to him, but I think deep down inside his biggest fear was that I would beat him. Dexter [Jackson] beat me in 2003 at the GNC Show of Strength and that irked me a little bit. I felt I should've won. It wasn't anything against Dexter personally.

**PH:** At this Olympia, I took Kai's actions to mean he wanted the title so bad he was willing to embarrass himself. On the one hand, I felt cheated. That was a moment in history that should've been about the physiques and not about the confrontation. On the other hand, I've forgiven him.

**JC:** You told me you were going to dedicate this Olympia to your dad when he passed away. Kai had no reason to butt in at the press conference. That said, I think it was an accident when he flipped his hair onstage and it hit you.

**PH:** Last year he physically pushed me at the posedown. He and I talked about that. I told my friends and family before the show this time, "Don't be surprised if this guy shows his ass." Did you see his reaction when I gave him the three facts at the press conference? He shook his head, bit his lip, and put the microphone down. He knew I'd beaten him. People are going to think I'm hating on Kai Greene. I'm not hating on Kai Greene. The Sunday after the Olympia I was praising the guy at the seminar. But Kai's problem is simple: he's a great bodybuilder

it backfired on him. He was out of line. What he did at the press conference and onstage was disrespectful.

**PH:** I think what happened was extremely annoying. It was unnecessary and it wasn't a joke. Is that really in Kai's nature? I don't know, but I think we saw a side of him that showed desperation.

**JC:** Look, I'm a guy who stood on that stage knowing I was going to take first or second 10 times, and I never considered acting like that.

**PH:** When you're playing basketball and other sports and you're losing, you resort to personal fouls. You do it because they're embarrassing you. Fast story: in 2000, we were playing basketball against the University of Oregon at Oregon. They were a top 10 team in the country. We were a small Division I team. First play of the game, we got dunked on, and I'm like, "Oh, f\*\*\*." I'm realising that we're going to get beaten so badly I'm probably going to be embarrassed.

We got beat by 48 friggin' points, and it was heartbreaking. I remember getting in there, and I was elbowing a guy I knew under the basket. He hadn't done anything to me. I should've been angry at my teammates who were too busy partying the night before. I remember the desperation.

**JC:** When I was placing second at the Olympia, Ronnie got under my skin. He liked to say he didn't feel

**"MY GOAL IS TO EQUAL RONNIE AND LEE HANEY WITH AN EIGHTH WIN."**



who cannot and will not give props to any other person. He hasn't done it. He went to Prague, and there's no reason he should not have finished [Greene pulled out after prejudging, citing medical reasons]. Kai acted like he did with me at the Olympia, and I handled myself the best way I could. It wouldn't have helped if I put hands on the guy. My thing is about showing positivity when challenged. When you're faced with danger and fear and adversity, the way you act shows us what you've got.

## THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS: HEATH PREDICTS NINE OLYMPIA WINS

**JC:** I think you can beat Ronnie's record.

**PH:** My goal is to equal Ronnie and Lee Haney with an eighth win and then make a huge campaign and say to the other competitors, "Look, I'm retiring now. Here's your chance to whoop my ass." So I'm considering—we'll have to revisit this in four years—doing the Arnold Classic in Ohio in 2019 and all the Grand Prix shows after the Olympia.

**JC:** We always strive for the challenges. It's why we started training. A bodybuilder never plans on being Mr Olympia. When you met me, you were like, "Wow, this guy is at a level I don't know if I'll ever get to." And now we're tied

with four wins each. But I have a little more experience and time in than you, Phil, so hear me out. You're going to have to stay hungry and find new challenges and challengers.

**PH:** I liken it to a Formula 1 race. The problem with racing Formula 1 is there's only so much you can do to that car before it starts breaking down. It's about working with what you've got and not being worried about what I call the fast and the furious, which is that moment when two guys are racing and one guy hits the nitrous too soon, and then the other guy finally hits it and blows the first guy away. When it comes to bodybuilding, I feel like I haven't hit the nitrous yet. I'm holding back.

**JC:** You're smart. What are you holding back for?

**PH:** I know there's going to be young guys coming up as I'm reaching the end of my Olympia reign. Guys trying to take me out. Look, I've been beating Kai since the 2011 Olympia. It'd be foolish of me to think he'll ever beat me as long as I continue to improve. And I mention Kai because he is the only guy going up against me now who ever beat me [2010 Arnold Classic]. Down the road, I don't know if there's a guy like me who hasn't competed yet, a guy who is going to come onto the scene and shake things up. I have to train to beat that guy, because that person is going to be friggin' dangerous.



**LEFT** Best friends and the last two men standing at the 2010 Mr Olympia. It was Cutler's last contest win.



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## CRABS IN THE BASKET

**JC:** One of the things I think you as a four-time Mr Olympia have to deal with that I didn't is the whole range and scope of social media now.

**PH:** I'll be the most loved and the most hated guy because of social media. It's the one thing I hate. I can say something to you in disagreement, and it can be taken completely ass-backward and used against me.

**JC:** I'm constantly defending you because I know you as a person.

**PH:** With social media, what was once someone's shield is now their sword. Fans can comment on whatever they want. They can attack you online. Oh, they'll say, "You're better than that, Phil. Why'd you call this guy a prick?" People who don't know me call me a douche bag, but if I tell them to go "f" themselves I'm the bad guy. Not that I should, because there are kids who are reading online and potential sponsors who might want to align themselves with my brand.

**JC:** The movie [*Generation Iron*] didn't help you.

**PH:** The movie came out, and people thought I was a little punk. The year 2013 was all about that movie. That caused a lot of pressure, pain, and frustration for me. Mentally, I had to wrestle with how I was going to handle it. And I realised these guys who talk junk out there were going to root for whoever they were going to root for, and my job was to just show up and beat ass onstage and have fun.

**JC:** I'd describe you as confidently arrogant. There's no question. You're the champ. You have to be. I was, too.

**PH:** And you know there's nothing wrong with being a champ and saying you want to whoop someone's ass. The underdog gets to say every mean thing he can possibly say, and everyone cheers

for him. It's almost like crabs in the basket. One crab climbs to the top of the basket and gets pulled back in by the others.

**JC:** We've discussed this, you and I. Choices are made in certain circumstances, and until a person is in that circumstance he doesn't have to make that decision. That said, I was a little more reserved than you are. I moved forward and tried to make positives out of the negatives. There were people who didn't like my physique, but I always tried to stay true to what I believed and didn't speak badly



**TOP** Starring in the 2013 docudrama *Generation Iron*.

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# “EVERYONE HAS A GIFT. I HAVE MINE IN BODYBUILDING. I’VE FOUND THE ONE THING I AM SUPREME AT.”

**about the other competitors. This might be a good place to explain to people who don’t understand what your nickname actually means.**

**PH:** My old roommate gave me the nickname The Gift. At the time I said, “Man, that’s the most arrogant bullshit I ever heard.” He said, “No, no, no. You have a great gift, man. But you’re not like the typical bodybuilder. You speak well, you come from a different sport. You’re going to enhance the world’s view of bodybuilding because you didn’t grow up saying you got sand kicked in your face and you wanted to be a bodybuilder.”

**JC:** Some people think it’s an arrogance thing...

**PH:** You and I both know, anyone who turns pro is genetically gifted. Everyone has a gift. I obviously have mine in bodybuilding. I’ve found the one thing I am supreme at. That said, I don’t just wake up and look like this. I’m taking advantage of my gift and

maximising it. But I want people to feel gifted themselves and find what they’re great at. Then they have to apply the passion, the intelligence, and the work to succeed. Maybe I could cop that attitude after winning four Sandows, but that’s not what it’s about to me.

## RESPECT: TALKING OTHER MR OLYMPIAS

**PH:** Let’s talk about a dude we both have a lot of respect for: Dexter Jackson.

**JC:** I look at him as a guy who doesn’t get the respect he deserves. Put Dexter’s track record against anyone’s.

**PH:** As a Mr Olympia, you always have to have Dexter in your rear view mirror. He comes in shape. It’s hard to beat a guy who is never off.

**JC:** He’s the king, and I’d love to see him come up and battle another top three spot at the Olympia.

**PH:** I came in the game in 2003, which is when Dexter started calling out guys like Shawn Ray and saying, “There’s no way you can even come close to this [physique development], so you’d better stay in retirement.” At the time I thought, “Wow, that’s a bold statement.” But then I started looking at photographs, and I’m like, “This guy is diced everywhere—he’s nasty.”

**JC:** I have more respect for him than almost any other bodybuilder on the planet.

**PH:** There was no other big guy that could beat you. Not Günter [Schlierkamp], not Markus Rühl. Only Ronnie Coleman.

**JC:** Listen, Phil, you’re my friend, but I’ll still say Ronnie was the greatest Mr Olympia. Until someone goes and breaks his record, which I think you can do. Ronnie was off the charts physique-wise.

**PH:** Ronnie in ’03 left people like, “Oh, shit, what the hell just came off



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this spaceship?" A Ronnie Coleman-type physique isn't going to come back. That shit isn't going to happen in this lifetime. It's impossible. If I'd have come into pro bodybuilding five years prior to when I did, I think I would have got demolished. But again, it was Dexter's physique even then that got me thinking, "Hey, here's what they're going to be looking for: full, round, cut up, diced up. What I can be." Dexter's example helped me realise if I pushed the envelope towards that direction, the judges would have no choice but to reward me. But I've got to ask you, Jay, going up against Ronnie and placing second four times to him, what kept you coming back?

## 2015 MR OLYMPIA: READY TO RUMBLE

**JC:** I knew I would win in time. While everyone else sat on the sidelines and said, "Ronnie is unbeatable" and "Ronnie is the best there ever was," I really thought inside I would win. Each show I did, I prepped like I was going to win that show.

**PH:** I think if I had your experience of placing second four times like that, it would've made me a better bodybuilder than I am. You don't quit, especially when you know you can get better. I was there when you beat Ronnie. You know I'm a Ronnie Coleman fan, Jay. I have more autographs of Ronnie than I do of you, and you're one of my best friends. But when you won the Olympia, it was a win for bodybuilding.

**JC:** I think your best look so far was 2011.

**PH:** I disagree—2013 was the best I ever looked and felt. I had to ask myself if I could get better than I did in 2013, and I felt I could. It just didn't come out on that day.

**JC:** I think you're pushing the limits of your physique now. I know. I did the same thing. You're getting bigger in the off-season,

which means when you come down the weight doesn't get sucked in. Do I think you can reclaim that form? Never say never.

**PH:** I think my best look is still coming. Again, last year wasn't my best, but I was still able to win. And that's the coolest part. Every guy I've competed against—from you to Kai to Branch [Warren]—was competing as a teen. I didn't do a show until I was 23 years old. I'm at a disadvantage, experience-wise, as far as being inside the gym as a bodybuilder. But I've been able to bridge that gap by making sure I don't make bad decisions and don't get hurt. I think my training style will enable me to be healthy enough to do it.

**JC:** I think your fifth win this year will be your biggest and best because now you can sit back and just be you and really just train and focus.

**PH:** There's other factors in my favour, too, I think. Guys are taking chances with their physiques for vanity issues. You know what? You can look good for 363 days of the year. I don't care about 363 days. I care about two [Friday night's Olympia prejudging and Saturday's finals]. That said, I'm expecting to get the most hatred next year.

**JC:** You're getting ready for it.

**PH:** I have to. If I'm not smart then I'm not doing my job. 2015 is going to be crazy because of 2014. There's going to be a lot of challenges and gossip. You know me—I have a close-knit group of friends I can verbalise my positives and negatives and my fears to. And I tell these friends to be fans of the sport. Now, if you're a crazy Kai Greene fan, we're going to have to talk [laughs]. But see the sport objectively, because then we can have a valuable conversation.



PER BERNAL



## THE MASTER AND DISCIPLE MYTH

**JC:** There's this whole myth that I discovered you.

**PH:** I think we played into that with the media.

**JC:** Let's clear it up.

**PH:** You didn't discover me. I was already competing.

**JC:** The truth is, you would have found your way no matter what. What I helped do was help get you paid so you could focus on bodybuilding.

**PH:** You told me I would win the USA that year and be a great pro, and to

have you say that...it generated a lot of buzz because you don't talk that way. But then people thought we trained together, lived together, partied together. We've heard it all, haven't we?

**JC:** I didn't train you. We have different training styles and personalities. Every person on this planet has something they're great at. Sure, we took greatness in bodybuilding to a different level. But to us, this is normal life. It's what we do. It's a job.

**PH:** You've been a great mentor and friend. You're a class act, and I never thought our friendship would waver, even when I was going up against you and finally beat you. You know, that year I placed second to you in Vegas [2010], that was one of the tensest years of my life. We have a lot of the same friends. The week of the show it was our friends who made it worse than we did. When you won I took a huge breath and exhaled, because it was a relief to finally have it be over, and now I could go back and hang out with

my friends. And when I won the Olympia that first time, it wasn't about beating you. It was about attaining a goal, achieving a dream.

**JC:** I know it was. I was proud of you when you won.

**PH:** I know. And you didn't retire onstage, because you didn't want to take any of my shine away. You've always been a great gentleman.

## MAKING BODYBUILDING COOL

**JC:** We've both faced adversity. I injured myself before the 2011 Olympia. When Wayne DeMilia tried to say I failed the diuretics test after the 2001 Olympia, I lawyered up. And I still say damned if I did [fail the test]! Four months later I passed the supposed same test when I won the Arnold Classic. This past year was a tough one for you. Your dad. Your wife's health. Getting your supplement line off the ground. All those guest appearances. But you keep doing it.

**PH:** If this wasn't fun, I wouldn't be doing it. Every day I wake up and I'm staring at four Sandows [laughs as if he can't believe it]. At the end of the day, I'm thinking I have a great opportunity to represent myself and my sport and do something awesome. I'm going to show people you can go through a lot of personal stuff, physical stuff, and that's the motivation for people outside of our sport to get involved. Back in the day, if you said you were a bodybuilder, you were the man. If you're a big guy nowadays, people will deny being bodybuilders. I don't want to walk down the street and have guys sneer and snigger and make fun. Bodybuilding is cool. I want to make it cool. And as far as keeping on, you know me, Jay: I'm the guy who plays a video game and if it says "game over" or "continue," I'm going to continue. I won't give up. I'm wired differently. **FLEX**



**TOP** April 5, 2003: 192-pound Heath meets 292-pound Cutler.



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## RISING STAR WILLIAM BONAC PROVES HE'S ONE TO WATCH IN 2015

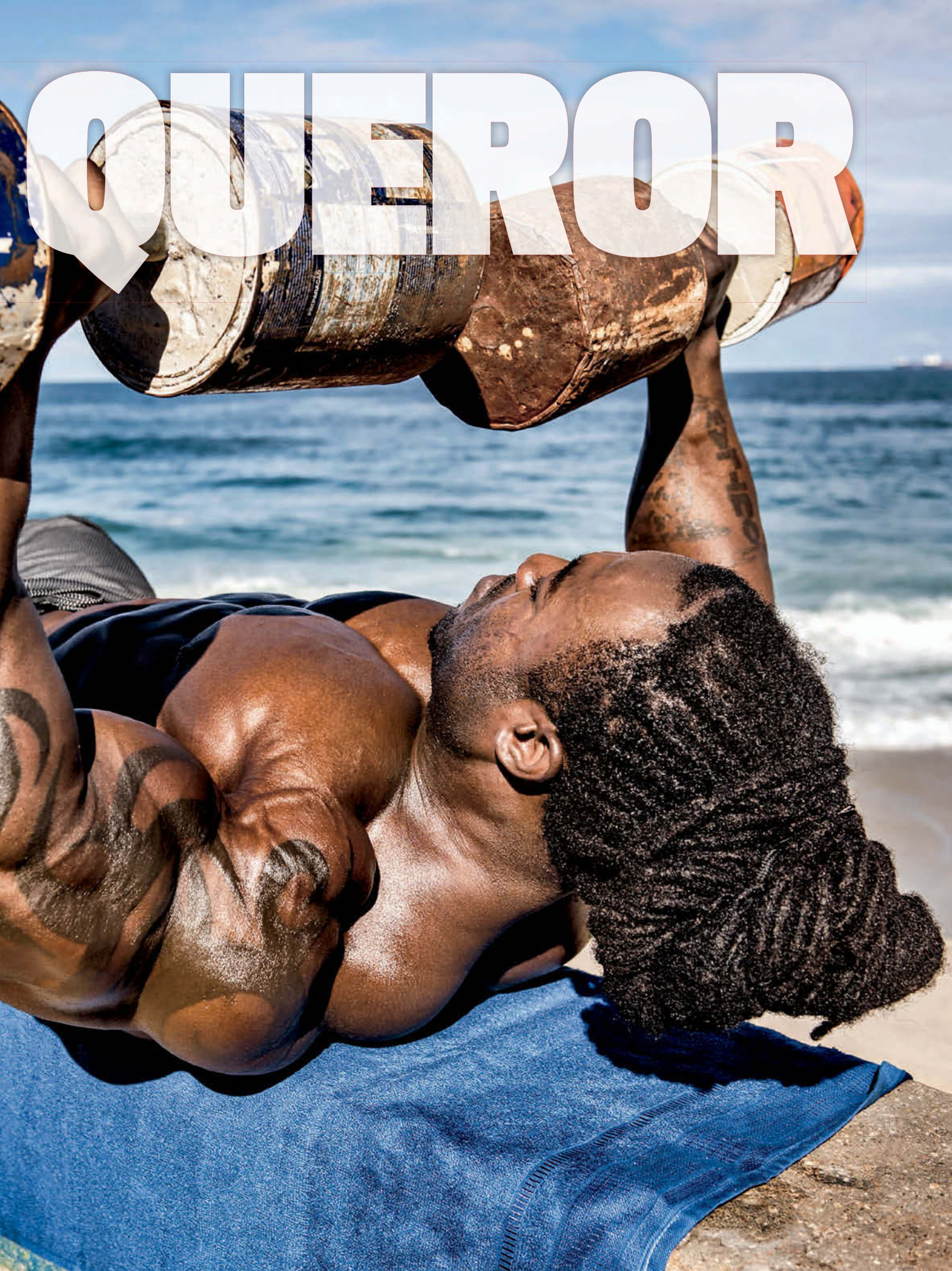
BY TONY MONCHINSKI PHOTOGRAPHS BY PER BERNAL

### WILLIAM BONAC

has quickly ascended the IFBB pro ranks, going from 212-pound also-ran to open-class champion by dint of his first pro victories in 2014 at the IFBB Golden State Championships and the IFBB Russian Grand Prix Fitness House Pro in November. Born in Ghana and currently living in Amsterdam, Bonac's nutritionist and trainer is fellow IFBB pro Neil Hill, a Welshman known as "Yoda" for the depth and breadth of his nutrition and training knowledge. Hill gave me an insight into the man he considers "one of the new, exciting breed of pros on the circuit".







QUEROR





# THE BEACH

The location was Ipanema Beach, across from Citibank Hall, where the 2014 Arnold Classic Brazil was held last April. "It was Bonac's first experience being shot by someone of photographer Per Bernal's calibre and I think he was just happy for the opportunity. The general public was very inquisitive but also excited and welcoming. They saw this 230-pound guy walking around in his shorts with no shirt on and they hadn't seen anything like that before. There were businessmen, policemen, kids—all stopping to make conversation and get a picture with him. I don't think I've ever seen as much positive interaction between fans and an athlete as I saw that day."

"It was a new experience for me," confirms Bonac. "It was a bit long but I enjoyed it—even though I was on my diet at the time!"

The outdoor gym itself, featuring concrete-poured weights, was primitive, but, says Hill, "it was like a mini Muscle Beach. It reminded me of some place Arnold, Franco, and Danny Padilla would have trained. The place was so organic and real, you didn't have to stage anything. And the backdrop was spectacular: the ocean, the sky. A really cool environment!"

## The Meet

Hill met Bonac nearly two years ago at the EVLS Prague Pro

(where Bonac placed 5th in the 212-and-under division). Flex Lewis introduced the two men. "When we started working together," Hill explains, "we had a very short off-season because William took six weeks off from training after Prague [in October 2013], then competed in Australia [in March 2014; where, now working with Hill, he placed 2nd in the open]. We've been working together since."

## The Man

William Bonac is 31 years old and the father of a 5-year-old son, Jeshua. At 5'7" and 228 pounds onstage, he's been training for a decade but lifting properly for about four years. Bonac is not married, but he's planning on it. Says William, "My lovely woman's name is Yvanka Augustinus. I do what I do for her and Jeshua."

Neil confirms this. "He's driven to be successful so he can provide for his family. A lot of pros get into the sport solely because they want to be bodybuilders. One of the things I like a lot about William is he wants to do well for his family. He doesn't want to win contests so he can say, 'Hey, look,

I made it in the sport.' He wants to be able to say, 'This is going to help us be able to buy a house. This is going to help us send our boy to college.'"

## The Training: Y3T-style

"What I liked about Bonac's training style is he was open to the idea of changing things around and not caught up with heavy weights, though he is naturally a very strong individual," Hill says. "He'd got over the egotistic lifting." Impressed as he was, Hill nevertheless made some changes to Bonac's training, adapting his own Yoda-3-Training to Bonac's needs. "It took three or four weeks to figure out what was going on with his body and how it would respond to the workout, but then we had it."

So what does "it" look like? Hill lays it out: "I have William on a four-week training cycle. Week 1 is heavy compound movements for every muscle group for 8-12 reps. I want to note I cut his training down because he had been training each body part twice a week. Now he does each body part once a week.

"Week 2 into Week 3, I have William working in the 14- to 18-rep range with half-compound, half-isolation exercises. He'll do two weeks of that, and during Week 3 he begins to up the tempo as far as his rep range goes. By Week 4 he's getting anywhere from 25-80 reps per set."

Twenty-five to 80 repetitions per set? Did Hill really say 80? "I wouldn't recommend someone doing 80 reps of lat pulldowns because their forearms and biceps are going to blow before their backs go," he says. "Same

## BASIC Y3T PROGRAMME

### Week 1

2-3 heavy compound exercises for 2-3 sets each in the 6- to 12-rep range.

### Week 2

Add an isolation exercise to the 2-3 compound exercises; 2-3 sets of each for 10-14 reps.

### Week 3

The exercises are similar to Week 2, but are typically done for one set and rep ranges vary from 14-30 or more reps—incorporating drop sets, giant sets, rest-pause, and supersets.





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## THE CONQUEROR

with chest. You can't do 80 repetitions without losing your triceps and shoulders first. So I incorporate dropsets for back and chest of 30 reps. William will do 15 reps of a back or chest exercise, lower the weight, and continue. I want him to force as much blood into the muscle as possible."

After Week 4, it's back to Week 1 and 8-12 reps.

William says he enjoys Neil's training protocols. "I had to get used to it at first because it was different from how I normally trained, but it's been very helpful because it is so different and shocked my body into new growth. Once in a while I do switch back to my old style of training, but only to maximise my pump because my body gets used to training routines very fast." Don't tell Neil!

### The Diet

"I changed his diet a fair bit," says Hill. "I helped William put a lot more variation in his meals. Before we started working together, I thought his diet was very one-dimensional: chicken and rice, chicken and rice, chicken and rice. I'm one of those people who try to get protein from as many different sources as possible. So with William now we mix it up: his first meal will be

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"CAN-DO"  
ATTITUDE!



## BONAC'S SAMPLE OFF-SEASON DIET

### MEAL 1

125 grams (dry-weight),  
2 whole eggs,  
10 egg whites

### MEAL 2

300 g cooked rice,  
200 g chicken,  
75 g green vegetables

### MEAL 3

300 g cooked rice,  
185 g beef,  
75 g green vegetables,  
1 tbsp natural peanut butter

### MEAL 4

150 g cooked rice,  
200 g white fish,  
75 g green vegetables,  
25 g avocado

### MEAL 5

200 g chicken,  
75 g green vegetables,  
25 g avocado

### MEAL 6

200 g white fish,  
75 g green vegetables,  
25 g avocado

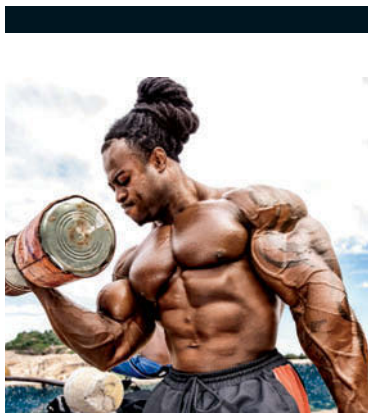
**NOTE:** Six litres of water per day



## BONAC DIPS FOR A QUICK PUMP BEFORE TAKING A DIP.



eggs, his second fish, his third turkey, etc. I have him getting up in the night and feeding himself through the night.



## BONAC'S CONTEST HISTORY

**2014:** Russian Grand Prix Fitness House Pro, 1st; Mr Olympia, 15th; Arnold Classic Europe, 6th; EVLS Prague Pro, 8th; San Marino Pro, 11th; Tampa Bay Pro, 2nd; Golden State Championships, 1st; Arnold Classic Brazil, 7th; Australian Grand Prix, 2nd

**2013:** EVLS Prague Pro, 5th

**2012:** EVLS Prague Pro 212, 4th; British Grand Prix 212, 6th; Europa Super Show 212, 3rd

"As far as supplements, when I met William he was basically using one protein powder. He wasn't even taking BCAAs. Financially it was difficult for him, given the economic climate. Since then, he's picked up a supplement contract with Ultimate Sports Nutrition in South Africa and that has really helped."

William admits that Neil's diet isn't his favourite thing. "Who likes to diet?" he laughs. "I like to eat tropical foods, but I will do what Neil asks of me because I want to win!"

### The Future

How far does Neil think Bonac can go? "I see William as being one of the exciting new breed of athletes who, if he continues to improve, will win major pro shows. He's a frightening athlete onstage, very difficult to compete against because he has no weak points. He's like a blend of a Kai Greene and a Shawn Ray all in one, but you've got to see him to appreciate it."

## THE CONQUEROR

What areas will Hill and Bonac focus on as Bonac continues his ascent in the IFBB ranks? "Shoulder width and adding more depth to his hams from the sides," says Neil. "William is naturally a little bit narrow in his shoulders, which makes him look very compact, very thick. All his muscle bellies are very impressive."

In September 2014, Bonac made his debut on the Mr Olympia stage. Though he placed 15th (many of us thought he deserved higher), he considers his first Mr Olympia a great experience. "The audience was great," Bonac says. "It's unfortunate about my placement, but I still enjoyed every minute of it!" After being compared to the best bodybuilders in the world, Bonac walked away determined to improve. "I felt we brought a good package to the Olympia," he says of his and Neil's work together. "Of course none of us is perfect, and with that being said, I could work on the width of my lats." Fans can expect to see the Conqueror at the Golden State Pro in 2015 to defend his title and he promises, "I will win the Tampa Pro show."

I ask Neil if he thinks—with guys like Bonac, Lionel Beyeke from Cameroon, Roelly Winklaar from Curaçao, and Mamdouh Elssbiay from Egypt—we'll see more talent emerging from countries not usually thought of when he thinks of world-class bodybuilders. "I think so," Hill says. "Genetic greatness can come from anywhere in the world. William has a very exciting future ahead of him. The fans and judges are embracing him." For now, the Conqueror has qualified for the 2015 Mr Olympia and you can be sure he's eyeing bigger things this coming season. **FLEX**

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BY STEVEN STIEFEL

# NUTRITION OVERHAUL

**NO SINGLE NUTRITION PLAN IS  
PERFECT FOR ALL OCCASIONS.  
TRY FLEX'S TWEAKS TO IMPROVE  
YOUR RESULTS THIS YEAR.**

# WHEN YOUR GOAL IS TO INCREASE MUSCLE MASS WHILE DISPLAYING A RIPPED PHYSIQUE,

you need to make significant shifts to your diet plan about every eight weeks. That's because your body adjusts to the amount of calories and the ratio of macronutrients you've been consuming and you'll "plateau", meaning you'll stop seeing the marked improvements that you saw over the first few weeks of your current plan.

So, yes, you can "eat clean" year-round, but you won't grow as much overall compared with when you alternate between shifting nutrition programmes that complement each other, spurring more muscle growth and reducing levels of body fat over time.

This article gives you food for thought on changes you can make to your current nutrition programme to encourage better long-term gains. While these are all valid strategies, you shouldn't try them all at once. They're meant to provide your body with different levels of calories and ratios of macronutrients that create metabolic confusion to support muscle building and fat burning.

Here are some changes you should consider implementing for about eight weeks each:



## GO HIGH FIBRE FOR ENHANCED DIGESTION

**BENEFIT:** Increasing your fibre intake not only supports long-term health, but it can also improve digestion so that you'll get better results from the other healthy foods you're consuming.

GETTY IMAGES (2)



## INCREASE DIETARY FATS TO SUPPORT MUSCLE BUILDING

**BENEFIT** A diet high in fats supports hormone production, which in turn leads to improved ability to add muscle mass. Consuming a diet high in fats also helps you cut carbs and total calories if your objective is to reduce body fat.

**GOOD FOR** Those who've been on a low- or moderate-fat programme. This change will support increased production of hormones such as testosterone, so it's good to add supplements that also support this

objective (vitamin D3, and fenugreek, among others).

**HOW TO DO IT** Consume at least 30% of your daily calorie intake from dietary fats, splitting these evenly between saturated and healthy fats. If you consume 4,000 calories for body-weight maintenance, then you should be consuming about 1,200 calories from dietary fats (about 133 grams per day), split fairly evenly over your whole-food meals. Avoid consuming dietary fats before and after workouts, but take them in at all other times of the day, including before bed, to help spare muscle tissue while you sleep.

## ADD A HIGH-CARB DAY ONCE A WEEK

**BENEFIT:** This will help restock muscle glycogen and drive up your metabolic rate, helping to fuel muscle growth while reducing body-fat stores.

**GOOD FOR:** Those whose growth has stagnated on low-carb diets. You can still follow your low-carb protocol six days a week, but you'll see much better benefits if you restock glycogen and use this technique to boost your metabolic rate for more effective fat burning. And you'll have much better workouts for the 2-3 days following your reloading day.

**HOW TO DO IT:** Go nuts with carbs one day per week, but also drastically reduce consumption of fats this day. You can take in sugar and other fast-digesting carbs, getting in 3-4 grams of carbs for every pound of body weight on this day. Yes, a 200-pound guy can down as many as 800 grams of carbs during the day. Bump up your pre- and post-workout carb consumption to as much as 100 grams for each shake. Emphasise carbs such as white and brown rice, potatoes, sweet potatoes, oats, and all forms of bread and other starchy foods. Cutting fat will encourage greater insulin release to better replenish glycogen stores.

**GOOD FOR:** Those who've been on a diet low in fibre. Many high-protein diets cut fibre very low, so it's a good idea to refeed fibre after a diet. In addition, fibre helps those who want to reduce body fat, providing greater satiety and slowing digestion of protein and carbs.

**HOW TO DO IT:** Start keeping track of your daily fibre intake. You want to get in at least a minimum of 30 grams per day, and you can

consume as much as 60 grams or more. Increase fibre consumption by about 10 grams over your current baseline, increasing by about 10 grams every 4-5 days until you reach your target intake. This will allow your body to accommodate a greater fibre intake. Drink plenty of fluids, but cut fibre intake before and after workouts, the times when you want fast calorie delivery. You can consume fibre from whole foods or from supplemental forms.

## CUT CARBS TO ONE GRAM PER POUND OF BODY WEIGHT PER DAY

**BENEFIT:** This will encourage your body to drop both water and body fat, but you'll likely feel a bit weaker in the gym. It's also a good idea to make adjustments to your training programme, going with higher rep schemes and lighter weights. It's great for prepping for a show or photo shoot, enhancing your muscle detail, but it will likely undercut strength.

**GOOD FOR:** People who've been following a moderate- to high-carb protocol for the past six weeks or longer and now want to decrease body fat.

**HOW TO DO IT:** You don't need to cut calories—just replace carbs with fats and protein. Your carb intake should be limited to complex carbs early in the day; then take in simple carbs (sugars) around the time of your workouts. Your total carb intake should be limited to one gram of carbs for your current body weight. So if you weigh 200 pounds, you should limit your carb intake to 200 grams each day, taking in very few carbs (from fibrous vegetables) with your dinner and no carbs before bed.

## CARBS SHOULD BE LIMITED TO COMPLEX CARBS EARLY IN THE DAY, SIMPLE CARBS AROUND WORKOUTS.

COMPLEX CARBS PROVIDE A STEADY STREAM OF ENERGY FOR HOURS.



## EMPHASISE AMINO ACIDS

**BENEFIT:** While you're likely already consuming a high-protein diet, you may not be getting enough of the amino acids that specifically enhance protein synthesis. Focusing on branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs) and other aminos will drive this crucial muscle-growth process.

**GOOD FOR:** Those who want to add muscle mass and take in aminos that reach muscle tissue as quickly as possible.

**HOW TO DO IT:** Look for protein products that are high in BCAAs, especially leucine. If you're relying on a protein product that doesn't tout its BCAA content, add 5 grams of BCAAs to it. BCAAs bypass the liver, reaching muscle tissue much more quickly than other aminos. Take 20 grams of BCAAs, split over four 5-gram doses throughout the day. Take one dose before workouts and another immediately afterwards to really drive protein synthesis and the accompanying muscle growth and recovery.



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**USE PROTEIN SHAKES AND WEIGHT GAINERS TO GET IN YOUR CALORIES EACH DAY.**



## **TRY A KETOGENIC DIET FOR FAST FAT BURNING**

**BENEFIT:** Allows your body to convert to using stored body fat, relying on ketones as a primary source of energy.

**GOOD FOR:** Those who are willing to follow a very strict diet, converting your body into a fat-burning machine.

**HOW TO DO IT:** Virtually cut carbs for a few days, and use ketone sticks to test your urine so you'll know when you have gone into ketosis. This is a physiological condition that happens when your body is deprived of carbs, which drives down blood-glucose levels. At this point, your body needs to turn to alternative fuel sources, and it reaches for body fat when you're also following a high-protein diet—it's easier for your body to convert stored fat into energy. This has a dramatic effect on body-fat levels, as fat is burned preferentially.

## **BULK UP WITH A HIGH-CALORIE DIET**

**BENEFIT:** Helps increase muscle mass and supports strength gains.

**GOOD FOR:** Guys who are hard-gainers, having trouble adding muscle mass, and strength athletes who want to make gains on their target lifts. Most hard-gainers are really just guys who don't consume enough quality calories to support adding muscle mass.

**HOW TO DO IT:** You have to force-feed throughout the day, which can be uncomfortable for guys who don't have a large appetite. For this phase, take in 20-25% more calories per day than you need for body-weight maintenance. This means that a guy who normally consumes 3,000 calories a day will bump that up to about 3,600-3,750 per day. Use protein shakes and weight gainers to make sure you get in your calories each day. A good time to add liquid calories is after a whole-food meal, when you don't want to eat anything more.



## INCREASE SUGAR INTAKE AROUND WORKOUTS

**BENEFIT:** Consuming sugar at most times of the day is not beneficial to your physique, but taking in these simple carbs around the time of your workouts gives you energy, encourages release of anabolic insulin, and helps restock muscle glycogen, the stored carbs in muscle tissue that will help fuel your next workout.

**GOOD FOR:** This strategy is great for serious athletes, whether your goal is improving performance or building more muscle mass or strength. Around the time of your workouts, insulin release promotes your athletic and physique goals by driving carbs into muscle tissue rather than to body-fat storage.

**HOW TO DO IT:** Before workouts, you should take in carbs to help fuel your training. Rely on simple carbs if you haven't eaten a meal for an hour or two to ease digestion beforehand. However, if you've consumed a full meal high in carbs within 60–90 minutes before training, then you may not need to augment with sugar. After workouts, though, one of the best ways to foster recovery is to take in  $\frac{1}{4}$  gram of sugar for every pound of body weight, with an equivalent amount of protein. In other words, if you're a 200-pounder, then you should swig down 50 grams of both sugar and fast-digesting protein immediately after your workout.

**DON'T SHY AWAY FROM THE SATURATED FATS FOUND IN EGG YOLKS, CHEESE AND OTHER DAIRY SOURCES, AND MEATS.**



**SIMPLE SUGARS SPIKE INSULIN LEVELS TO TRANSPORT NUTRIENTS TO MUSCLES.**

## GETTING DEFINED

THESE ARE THE TERMS THAT WILL HELP YOU THRIVE ON YOUR NUTRITION-PROGRAMME OVERHAUL

**Complex carbs** These carbs are high in fibre and break down slowly, which means they do not cause much of an insulin spike. This is beneficial when you're trying to reduce stored body fat. Also referred to as "slow-digesting" carbs, these include vegetables and fruits, legumes and beans, nuts and seeds, high-fibre grains, as well as sweet potatoes, brown rice, and oats.

**Simple carbs** Also called "fast-digesting" carbs, this type breaks down very quickly (beginning in your mouth), and insulin is quickly released as they're absorbed into the body. Insulin shuttles these carbs to muscles when you're active. Examples of simple carbs include sugar, honey, agave, fructose (fruit sugar), and some grains, including white rice, and white bread.

**Fibre** These carbs are not absorbed by the body, but they're crucial for health and assisting muscle gains. There are two types of fibre: soluble and insoluble. Soluble fibre dissolves in water to form a gel, slowing down digestion. This makes you feel full, which can help control weight. It also can help lower LDL ("bad") blood cholesterol and glucose levels. Insoluble fibre helps clean your digestive tract. The good news: you don't need to worry about what type of fibre you consume. Just get in a minimum of 30 grams per day. Good sources include fibrous vegetables, beans and legumes, nuts and seeds, and some whole-grain breads (which may also be high in other carbs, so check labels).

**Fibrous vegetables** These vegetables are very low in calories and carbs but high in the indigestible form of

carbs: fibre. They include broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, lettuce and other leafy vegetables, cabbage, and onions. When you're trying to decrease carbs from vegetables, consider reducing your intake of corn, peas, carrots, and (of course) potatoes.

**Healthy fats** While we'd argue that most fats are healthy, this is the name that's typically given to mono- and polyunsaturated fats. This includes the most beneficial of all fats, omega-3s, which are notoriously lacking in most diets. Emphasise the following foods: fatty fish, avocados, flax and other seeds and nuts, and healthy oils (canola and olive).

**Saturated fats** These fats have traditionally been called "unhealthy," but nutrition scientists now realise their benefits. Don't shy away from the saturated fats found in egg yolks, cheese and other dairy sources, and meats. You can even opt for dark meat over lean breast meat when you're trying to boost your intake of saturated fats.

**Trans fats** These chemically altered fats should be eliminated from every healthy diet. Also known as hydrogenated fats, they allow saturated fats to be converted into a liquid form at room temperature and have already been removed from many manufactured foods.

**Ketones** Your body makes these chemicals when insulin is in short supply due to a very low intake of carbs. Ketones are the organic compounds that result when your body-fat stores are broken down for energy. **FLEX**



FOR



# UGLY ROAD TO GLORY

Nathan De Asha didn't let growing up on a troubled council estate or going to prison stop him from becoming British champion

BY JOHN PLUMMER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHRIS BAILEY





**Winning the British Championships last year**



**Last year's British Championships marked the start of a new era.**

None of the old guard that had dominated the heavyweights and super-heavyweights since the turn of the century—Dave Titterton, Stuart Core, Darren Ball, Zack Khan and Alvin Small—were present. All had either ascended to the pro ranks or weren't competing.

Their absence paved the way for youth to take centre stage and it seized the opportunity. A ripped James Hollingshead, 25, won the super-heavyweights and his friend Nathan De Asha, 28, went one better by winning the heavyweights and overall title to claim an IFBB pro card.

De Asha, a former British junior and intermediate champion, was



tipped to do well but nobody expected him to dominate the competition as much as he did. His tiny waist, cartoon-like 3D muscles and great structure had people likening him to a mini Phil Heath.

Comparisons with a four-time Mr Olympia may be a little premature but the hype is understandable given how desperate Britain is for a new bodybuilding superstar. Welshman Flex Lewis might be king of the 212s but nobody from these shores is making an impact in the open division. Germany has Dennis Wolf, France has Lionel Beyeke and Holland has William Bonac. Britain doesn't have anybody in that league.

In fact, no Brit has qualified for the Olympia since Eddie Abbew in 2007 and you have to go back to the days of Dorian Yates in 1997 to find the last British male open class pro

show winner. Could De Asha be the one to make the breakthrough? He has the physical gifts and if his upbringing is anything to go by, he won't be found lacking in mental toughness.

## **TOXTETH CHAMP**

De Asha was one of four children growing up in a single-parent household on a council estate in Toxteth, a district of Liverpool scarred by riots in 1981. "I always said to my mum 'I'll do something to make you proud'," he recalls.

He was a sporty, hyperactive youth. "I weighed about 132 lbs in my teens," he says. Bodybuilding entered his life by default. "One day I came out of college for the summer holidays," he says. "There was absolutely nothing to do. My cousin gave me a *Pumping Iron* DVD and I

was so bored I watched it.

"I was fascinated. Not so much by Arnold but by Lou Ferrigno. I liked his aggression. Afterwards I started going to the gym. I saw an old friend who was a bodybuilder and I said 'I want to be massive.'"

Since then he's been striving for precisely that. He did his first show at the age of 20 and made such an impression early on that he was asked to do his first guest spot four weeks before the junior British Championships, a show he won weighing 196 lbs.

De Asha remembers losing one local show and pinning up a picture of the guy who beat him. "I said to myself 'you'll never beat me again, mate' and later in the year I beat him."

At 23 he became British under-90 kg intermediate champion. His shape and structure were evident and big things were predicted but the wheels came off spectacularly in 2012 when De Asha was preparing for the super-heavyweights at the British Championships.

The country was in the grip of

# **"I SAW AN OLD FRIEND WHO WAS A BODYBUILDER AND TOLD HIM I WANTED TO BE MASSIVE."**

**De Asha's 27-inch waist is one of his key assets**







**Leg press**

summer riots and the young body-builder made some comments on Facebook that were posted to the police and he was jailed for 18 months for encouraging riots.

De Asha, who still maintains his innocence, was studying sports science at university at the time, as well as trying to hold down a job and prepare for his contest. "It messed



**Lat pulldown**



everything up for me," he says.

He was freed on August 31, 2012 and a few weeks later saw Anth Bailes turn pro at the British Championships in Manchester. A year later a minor operation forced him to withdraw from the finals in Harrogate five weeks out. The years were slipping by.

In bodybuilding, you're hot or history. New physiques emerge all the time and De Asha's prolonged absence meant he was in danger of falling into the latter category, but the upside was that he was able to



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## ARMS BY DE ASHA

### A SAMPLE ARMS WORKOUT

#### BICEPS

Warm up on machine curls: 3 x 10-20 reps

Straight bar curl focusing on time under tension: 4 x 12-15

Standing dumbbell curl: 3 x 10

Seated incline dumbbell curl: 3 x 12

Cable curl with EZ bar: 4 x 10\*

*\* hold and squeeze for 3 secs at mid-point*

### TRAINING SPLIT

**Monday:** Chest and calves

**Tuesday:** Hamstrings (morning) and quadriceps (afternoon)

**Wednesday:** Back and calves

**Thursday:** Shoulders

**Friday:** Glutes and hamstrings

**Saturday:** Arms\*

**Sunday:** Rest

*\* De Asha's arms grow so quickly he only trains them every other week*

prepare for last year's national finals under the radar until some leaked pre-contest pictures on social media caused a buzz two months out.

Sasan Heirati was favourite to win the heavyweights and overall. De Asha, however, scraped under the 100 kg limit and defeated his main rival in the weight classes. His ensuing overall victory was almost a formality.

"Sasan was the only person that had me worried," says De Asha. "Every time I was training and doing cardio I had him in my mind. I thought 'I'm going to beat him. I want a FLEX photoshoot!'"

De Asha did indeed get the star treatment from this magazine the day after the finals but he hasn't been dazzled by success. "I just try to keep it normal," he says. "I still work on building sites. I've got a few more people following me online and more guys ask me to do guest spots and gym appearances. But that's all. I'd love to be able to focus 100% on bodybuilding because I don't think I'll be able to tap fully into my potential until I do. But I won't change as a person."

De Asha's ambition is to be in the Olympia top six by the time he's 32. He knows he has some major growing to do by then—intelligent growing that doesn't sacrifice his amazing shape and 27-inch waist.





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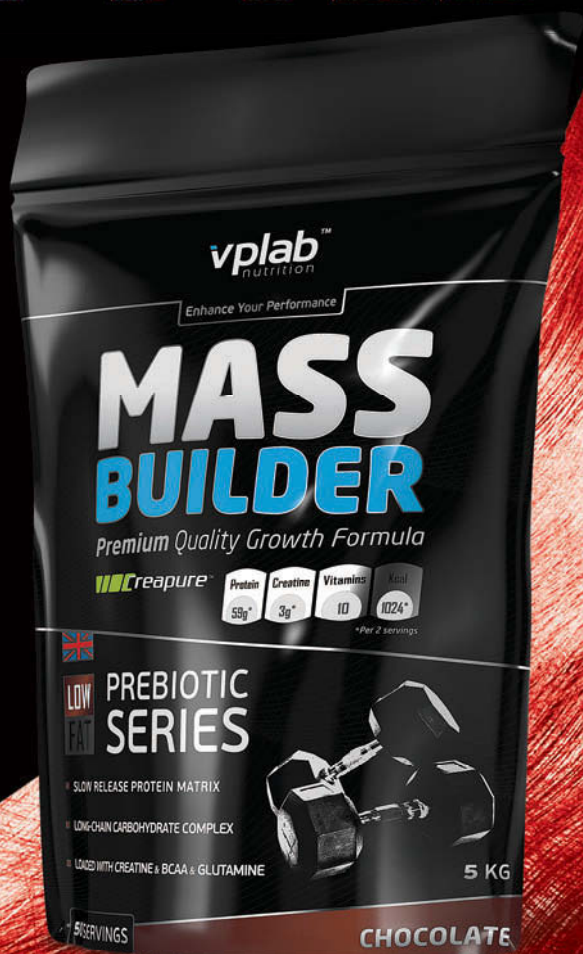
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"I look up to guys like Shawn Ray, Dexter Jackson and Phil Heath," he says. "Like me, they're not the biggest guys on stage but their physiques and stature are unreal. Their 3D appearance is more pleasing than that big lumpy look."

How does someone so huge have such a small waist? "I do cardio all year, plus I do things like yoga and Pilates but no matter what I eat or do, my waist stays small," he says. "I reckon I can get on stage at 235 or 240 lbs but I don't want my waist to grow more than 2 or 3 inches. I won't sacrifice aesthetics for mass."

## BACKSTREET BOY

De Asha trains six days a week at long-term second home Body FX gym in Runcorn. He hits every body part once during that time except back and hamstrings, which get trained twice. "They're my major weak parts," he says.

There are no frills or secrets. "My body responds to heavy weights," he says, "basic compound movements. But occasionally I do some rest-pause or slow movements—five seconds up and five seconds down." Two or three working sets of 12-15 reps is the norm.

He has lifted some crazy weights, including 300 kg squats for reps. "I've always been a heavy squatter," he says. "I was brought up in a backstreet gym without

any fancy machines and if you couldn't bench or squat a lot you were nothing.

"I train wiser and slightly lighter now but I still love to go heavy and don't train with machines very often. I prefer dumbbells and barbells. Perhaps that's why my muscles have that roundness. I think machines give you a different look. I believe in raw iron and just go for it."

De Asha does 20 minutes of cardio most days off-season and adds spinning classes and cross-trainer

sessions pre-contest. He's big on cardio. In fact, he must be the only man to have won the British bodybuilding championship and completed the London marathon in the same year. "It took me hours but I did it," he says with undisguised pride.

With prep coach Nathan Harman in his corner, he is also big on food. "I was consuming 6,000 calories a day in the run-up to Nottingham," he says. "Off-season I do the same but I can add more to it and am allowed the odd pizza."

## De Asha plans to make his pro debut later this year





**Side chest  
at the British  
Championships**

"Nathan is more of a friend than a prep coach. He brings reliability and consistency and shows a lot of respect and loyalty."

With a second child due in March, and a possible pro debut at the end of the year, this could be a big year for the man nicknamed the Prophecy, and who goes by the name Nathan Sylvester on Facebook.

He reflects again on his winding route to the top. "I was going to be a dietitian and prison took that away from me," he says. "But it gave me something else. I've shown that you can go on and achieve something and that not everyone that goes inside is a bad person. People make mistakes and everyone deserves a second chance." **FLEX**

**"I LOOK UP  
TO GUYS  
LIKE SHAWN  
RAY, DEXTER  
JACKSON AND  
PHIL HEATH.  
THEY'RE NOT THE  
BIGGEST GUYS  
ON STAGE BUT  
THEIR PHYSIQUES  
ARE UNREAL."**

## **NATHAN DE ASHA**

**Age:** 28

**Birthplace:** Liverpool

**Lives:** Liverpool

**Height:** 173 cm (5 ft 8 ins)

**Weight:** 99.9 kg (220 lbs) contest;  
116 kg (256 lbs) off-season

**Career Highlight:** 2014 UKBFF  
heavyweight and overall British  
champion

**Ambition:** Top six at the Olympia by  
the age of 32

**Training advice:** Train hard and  
never give up.

**Sponsor:** Xplosive Ape, Muscle Meat

**Contact:** On Facebook as Nathan  
Sylvester; Twitter @nathand86;  
Instagram ifbbtheprophecy







# OPERATION 212

**BRITISH PRO HUNNI  
GLANVILLE ON WHY  
HE'S SHRINKING TO  
BEAT THE KIDS**

BY JOHN PLUMMER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY GARY PHILLIPS





**A vascular Hunni Glanville  
at Ultimate Fitness in  
Birmingham**







**For almost a decade, Hunni Glanville has been flying the flag for Britain in the IFBB pro league.** He's achieved some creditable placings, most notably 5th at the 2008 Romanian Grand Prix, and has lined up against the very best, including Phil Heath and Kai Greene at the 2013 Arnold Classic Europe.

It's been quite an adventure for the man from Luton but he has yet to fulfil his dream of competing at the Mr Olympia. It's not that Glanville lacks genetics: his shape compares with anybody in Britain. His main problem has been that he doesn't have enough mass to hang with the top guys.

Glanville is usually one of the lightest men on stage. Weighing some 222 lbs, he can easily give away 30 or 40 lbs to his rivals and at pro level you can't do that and expect to win.

At 5 ft 7 ins tall, he's always assumed he was too tall to get down to the 212s. Most 212 guys are no taller than 5 ft 5 ins but now, at the age of 40, he has decided to give it a go.

He has been dieting since before Christmas and if everything goes to plan he will make his 212 debut this spring and possibly compete at BodyPower in Birmingham. It could be just the challenge he needs to revive a career that still promises much.

"If I get down to 212 I might do Slovakia in April and possibly BodyPower in May," he says. "If I don't make weight I will do the open class at Toronto again so there are lots of options."

## GROWING PAINS

Glanville has had more than his share of ups and downs in a career spanning nearly 20 years. He first competed a week after his 21st birthday in 1995 and was immediately hailed as one of Britain's most exciting talents. It's easy to see why: he has the kind of structure most men dream of. Everything flows.

His conditioning and legs were, for many years, weak points but he was so good he kept winning. As he climbed the ladder and

began to compete against the best in Britain his flaws began to cost him and he suffered a series of near misses in his pro card quest. Finally, after he became British heavyweight champion in 2004, he joined the paid ranks.

He made his pro debut in New York in 2006 and since then has dazzled and frustrated in equal measure. When he dials it in, as he did in Romania in 2008 and in Spain the previous year, he looks world class.

But every step forward has been accompanied by one back. His European performances at the end of the last decade suggested he was on the verge of a breakthrough but in 2009, he tore his patella and it took four years to heal properly.

His 2013 invitation to the Arnold Classic Europe was a great opportunity to get back in the big time but Glanville was well below his best and didn't place but at least he had the distinction of sharing a stage with Heath, Greene, Dennis Wolf, Shawn Rhoden and Victor Martinez—how many men can say that?





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On stage in Spain in 2007



"People say I have achieved a lot but I have not achieved my goal," says Glanville. "That is to be on the Olympia stage. Also, have I reached my true potential yet? Again, the answer is 'no' so that's something else I'm chasing. I'd like to think my best performance on stage is still to come and I think I have a couple of years in me to do it."

## PEC ATTACK

Glanville's upper body has always had the wow factor and his chest is particularly impressive. However, his approach to training it has changed over the years.

"When I started I was living in Scotland and my gym only had a flat bench and an incline bench so for the first few years it was all about bench pressing and how much I could lift," he says. "I was a lot stronger then. I could bench 190 kg for three reps although I'd say my personal best was 140 kg for 20 reps."

For beginners, he reckons this basic approach is fine. "You see people doing all these fancy isolation exercises and technical movements when all you need for the first two years are the dumbbell incline press and flat bench press and your

Glanville finished 13th at the Toronto Pro Supershow in Canada last year and then hit on the idea of trying the 212s. It came to him during this FLEX photoshoot at which Sami Al Haddad, who won back-to-back 212 pro shows in 2014, was also present. Glanville was surprised to discover that the two men were of similar height and began to wonder

if he too could get down to 212 lbs. With the encouragement of Dougie Black, owner of his sponsor Extreme Nutrition, he thought he'd try and find out.

It's a brave move at this stage of his career but there is still a sense with Glanville that the best is yet to come and if it pays off, he could yet become an Olympia debutant in his 40s.



chest will grow," he says. "You can add maybe a Hammer strength incline press if you like but don't bother with the isolation exercises until you get a bit of muscle."

Now Glanville goes lighter, does more reps (always more than 10) and uses a wider choice of exercises. "I have learned it's not about how much weight and setting records," he says. "If you go below 10 reps you are crossing over into powerlifting. Time under tension is the key both off-season and pre-contest."

"I find a lot of people who train heavy have very shallow muscles. They don't get the full range of motion and the contraction at the top of the movement."

Glanville still gravitates towards free weights. But he is less bench press-obsessed and occasionally even uses machines.

"If I ever flat bench press now it's always at the end of my workout because I sustained a shoulder injury years ago. I was lifting too heavy too soon. Now I do very slow negatives and explode up."

## HUNNI GLANVILLE

Born: **Cape Town, South Africa**

Lives: **Luton**

Age: **40**

Weight: **101 kg (222 lbs) contest; 108 kg (238 lbs) off-season**

Height: **170 cm (5 ft 7 ins)**

Career Highlight: **5th to Dexter Jackson at 2008 Romanian Grand Prix**

Ambition: **To qualify for the Olympia**

Training advice: **Keep it simple, keep it consistent and if you have the time and patience to learn about nutrition, you can go anywhere in the sport.**

Sponsor: **Extreme Nutrition**

To contact: **On Facebook Hunni Glanville IFBB pro**







## GLANVILLE'S CHEST ROUTINE

**Incline dumbbell press:** 3 x 12-15

**Cable crossover:** 3 x 15-20 reps

**Incline Hammer press:** 3 x 12-15

**Decline Hammer press:** 3 x 15 reps

**Dip:** 3 x 15 (using a 10 kg chain)

Most guys enjoy training chest so it's surprising to hear it isn't one of Glanville's favourites. "It's always been my strong area but I hate training it," he confesses. "I find it incredibly boring. But once I get into it, I'm rocking."

Glanville eats seven meals a day. "Recently I have switched one of my main carb sources from rice to sweet potato," he says. "I found rice was making me heavy. My main protein source is chicken but I have recently been eating a lot of white fish and I think that has helped."

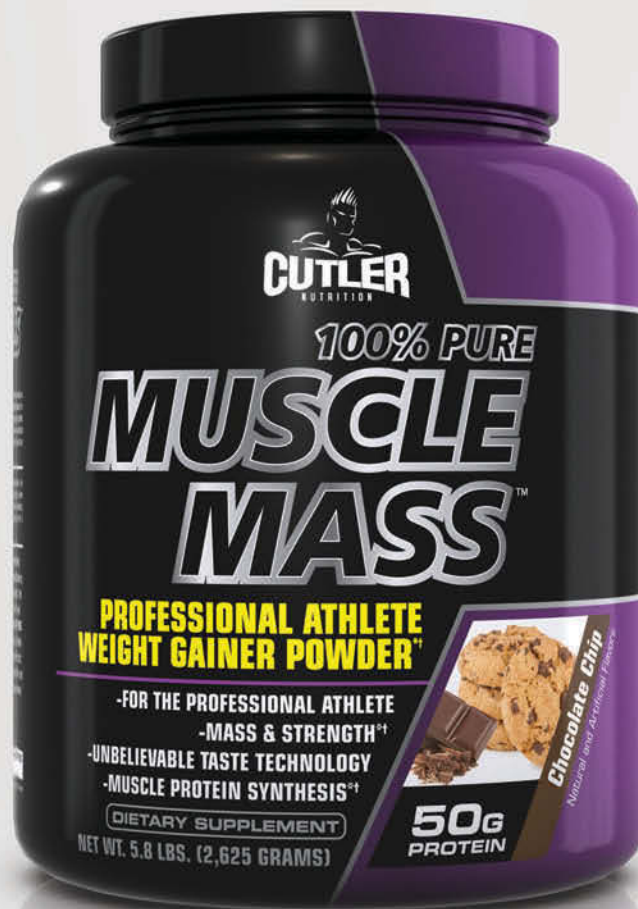
The big question now is whether he can get down to 212 lbs and give his career a late-life boost.

"I have stayed leaner this year and really stuck to my diet," he says.

"I have won the British but I won't class myself as anything until I have stepped on the Olympia stage." **FLEX**



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# CLASSIC MUSCLE

## TIME TO SHINE

**THE BRITISH BODYBUILDING SEASON BEGINS AGAIN  
ON APRIL 12TH WITH THE UK NATIONALS IN LEICESTER.**

**Ben Noy winning  
at last year's  
UK Nationals**



■ **Since it was introduced two years ago**, this drug-tested show has been the springboard to success for many athletes. Previous champions include Ryan Terry and Ben Noy, who are now both IFBB men's physique pros, and Ruth Dales, who went on to become British champion last year to earn her bikini pro card.

The Nationals offers a fast-track route to success because winners get to represent the UK at the IFBB European and world championships.

UKBFF vice-president Dennis "Sugar" Christopher will once again promote the show at the huge De Montfort Hall.

It begins what is likely to be another record-breaking year for the UKBFF, with the always-packed Portsmouth qualifier taking place a week later.

### IN THIS MONTH'S CLASSIC MUSCLE

**OWEN POWELL**

Britain's new king of aesthetics

**ANNA PRZESLAWSKA**

English Grand Prix champion on switching from bikini to bodyfitness

**RYAN TERRY**

The British men's physique pro compares US and European judging

**NINA ROSS**

on getting your cardio right

**TOM PLATZ**

Chris Lund looks back at the career of the legendary leg man

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# TRUE CLASSIC

BRITISH CLASSIC BODYBUILDING CHAMPION **OWEN POWELL** IS THE EPITOME OF OLD-SCHOOL AESTHETICS

**Few British bodybuilders are being talked about more than Owen Powell right now.** At just 25 years old, he has one of the most beautifully balanced structures in the land, as displayed at last year's national finals, where he won the Classic class.

Powell idolises old-school bodybuilders like Samir Bannout rather than the mass monsters of today and bases his elegant, classical routines on the legends of the past; he can even do the rarely seen vacuum pose.

He is now planning to put his aesthetics on the line against hardcore bodybuilders in the light-heavyweight division.

## **FLEX: When and why did you start weight training?**

**OWEN POWELL:** I started training when I was 16. I had a very bad childhood; I was living at my auntie's house with my mum and brother, which was right next to an old-school bodybuilding gym. I originally started to get rid of a lot of anger that I had and to build some muscle so I could defend myself. I used to go before and after school but pretty soon my reasons changed and turned into the dream I'm still following today. I could never decide if I wanted to be an artist or an athlete... so I became both.

## **How did you get into competing?**

I wanted to compete as soon as I knew what bodybuilding was. It just took some time because of my situation.

## **What was it like becoming British champion in 2014?**

It was a great feeling. I had so much support from Fitness One Gym in Margate where I train and work. Joe Cooper, who runs it, has been great to me, along with my mum, my brother Ash and my girlfriend Alice Marie. I achieved a short-term goal I set out to

achieve and now I have that title of British champion. I'm very grateful and proud.

## **You are not afraid to criticise the direction of hardcore bodybuilding. What do you think has gone wrong?**

Joe Weider said bodybuilding was a sport, a lifestyle and art. I think the art has been lost. No attention is paid to the midsection or posing any more and everyone still seems to be chasing size at all costs. It's easy to be big, but to be big and beautiful is another story.

## **What are your plans for 2015?**

I'm having my first offseason right now. I'm just focusing on the British finals again in October except I'm moving up to the open class, probably the light-heavies. I'm sure there are no expectations of me placing in the open but I train to win so you can expect a surprise.

## **Describe your training split.**

**Monday:** *Quads and hamstrings*

**Tuesday:** *Rest*

**Wednesday:** *Chest and triceps*

**Thursday:** *Back and biceps*

**Friday:** *Calves, delts and traps*

**Saturday:** *Rest*

**Sunday:** *Arms*

## **How many exercises, sets and reps do you do?**

I do one week of low volume—normally 8–10 reps—followed by one week of high volume, doing anywhere up to 100 reps on some exercises, plus plenty of drop sets and supersets, etc.

## **Describe a favourite workout.**

Any session where I surprise myself by how far I can push myself—which is every session.

## **What are your best lifts?**

160 kg squat for 23 reps; 200 kg bentover row for 14 reps; wide-grip

chins for 34 reps and 120 kg incline bench for 16 reps

## **What are your strengths and weaknesses?**

I used to have weak points. Now if I want to increase or decrease a muscle by half an inch the whole body has to do likewise.

## **What do you do for cardio?**

I have a treadmill in my house. I do intervals on that.

## **Describe your pre-contest diet.**

High protein, very low carbs and close to zero fat. I've never had an offseason before so this year hopefully I can gradually bring my carbs down so I don't have to go straight down to hardly any.

## **What's your favourite cheat meal?**

Pizza! Anyone that knows me knows I love pizza.

## **If you could only have three supplements, what would they be?**

BCAAs, whey isolate and multivitamins and minerals.

## **Who is your favourite bodybuilder and why?**

Arnold! Because he motivated more people and was loved by more people than any other bodybuilder. His physique was a work of art. The man is a living god.

## **What's the most common mistake in the gym?**

Moving the weight from point A to point B with sloppy form and no mind-muscle connection and stopping when it starts to hurt.

## **Where would you like to be in five years' time?**

Married to my beautiful girlfriend Alice Marie and training for the Mr Olympia.





**"IT'S EASY TO BE  
BIG, BUT TO BE BIG  
AND BEAUTIFUL IS  
ANOTHER STORY"**

## OWEN POWELL

- **AGE:** 25
- **PLACE OF BIRTH:**  
Deal, Kent
- **LIVES:** Ramsgate, Kent
- **HEIGHT:** 175 cm  
(5 ft 9 ins)
- **WEIGHT:** 81 kg (178 lbs)  
contest weight
- **CAREER HIGHLIGHT:**  
2014 UKBFF British  
Classic Bodybuilding  
champion
- **AMBITION:** To finish  
my masterpiece
- **SPONSORS:** Grenade
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Facebook: Owen Powell  
- Classic Bodybuilder

# GRAND PRIX QUEEN

**ANNA PRZESLAWSKA IS THE REIGNING ENGLISH GRAND PRIX BODYFITNESS CHAMPION**

**Anna Przeslawska first competed in bikini fitness contests in 2012** but since switching to the more muscular bodyfitness category she has enjoyed a rapid ascent to the top.

## **FLEX: Why did you start weight training?**

**ANNA PRZESLAWSKA:** I have always stayed fit and active but I didn't have the right guidance before. Five years ago I met someone who was my partner at the time and he was a personal trainer and bodybuilder. He was really passionate about the sport and he began to coach me.

## **Why did you choose to compete?**

I was always in the gym and people kept telling me that I should enter competitions but at first I said that I wouldn't be comfortable being in a bikini in front of all those people. My gym in Leamington Spa actually organised a show so as it got closer I just decided to give it a go.

## **Why did you switch from bikini to bodyfitness?**

The first show I ever did was bikini and I didn't know what to expect and I won. It was amazing to win and I was hooked from that day forwards. I really like to train heavy and push myself, and with my body shape I find that I'm much better suited to bodyfitness and I am much more successful in this category.

## **What did it feel like to win the English Grand Prix?**

Amazing because I was competing against Eszter Pati, who was going into the show as the British champion and she is a friend of mine as well. I was also against Maria Scotland so I really didn't think I would even make top three. When I was called up for the top three I thought I would place third and when I didn't hear my name I was really

surprised but I ended up placing first; it was one of the best days ever.

## **Why did you move from Poland to the UK?**

I was 19 and I always wanted to live overseas. I decided to move to England in 2005 but I only planned to stay for one year and then move to Germany but it's 10 years later and I'm still here.

## **What is your job?**

I am a Polish interpreter for hospitals and different places. I am also close to completing my personal training qualifications. Fitness is my passion and that is what I really want to do.

## **How has bodybuilding changed your life?**

It is my passion and I really love it. If you go to my room you can see I have supplements and posters everywhere and my trophies are on show too. Most of my clothes are actually gym clothes and most of my friends are people that I met in the gym so I couldn't imagine living without it. It is my career and my social life.

## **What is your motivation?**

I always want to keep getting better. I don't compare myself to anyone but there are always some weak points that can be improved. It doesn't matter how good I look, I can always make improvements and look better. I am always setting little goals and I have to work hard to achieve them.

## **What's your training split?**

My training changes a lot but right now I'm training five days per week, with weekends off. Sometimes I even do seven days a week including cardio. I train legs twice a week as well as all the other muscle groups. After each

session I do high intensity cardio for up to 60 minutes.

## **How many reps and sets do you do?**

I normally train heavy doing 8-10 reps but never above 12 reps because I am always trying to recruit muscle.

## **What are your favourite lifts?**

Single-arm rows

## **What do you do for cardio?**

The main cardio I do is the Stairmaster because it's the hardest cardio machine in the gym and it really takes a lot out of me to do it. I do fasted cardio before my breakfast for 30 minutes and before a competition I will go again in the evening and do one hour on different machines:

*20 minutes: bike*

*20 minutes: treadmill*

*20 minutes: Stairmaster*

## **Describe your pre-contest diet.**

My main meal is turkey or white fish and broccoli because that is what really works when it comes to building muscle. I also have seven to eight litres of water per day, along with six to seven meals per day. For breakfast I have oats, nuts and two scoops of whey protein powder with water and I really love that meal. I will make protein pancakes and protein cheesecake too.

## **If you could have only three supplements, what would they be?**

Protein powder, taurine and a pre-workout.

## **Where would you like to be in five years' time?**

I want to compete at a higher level and get my pro card. I also want to help other people accomplish their goals through my personal training.

**"I WANT TO COMPETE AT A HIGHER LEVEL AND GET MY PRO CARD"**





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## ANNA PRZESLAWSKA

- **AGE:** 29
- **PLACE OF BIRTH:**  
Poland
- **LIVES:** Coventry
- **HEIGHT:** 165 cm  
(5 ft 5 ins)
- **WEIGHT:** 64 kg (141 lbs)
- **CAREER HIGHLIGHT:**  
Winning the English  
Grand Prix
- **AMBITION:** To get  
my pro card
- **SPONSORS:** Scitec  
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- **CONTACT:** Twitter:  
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# RYAN TERRY

BRITAIN'S IFBB PRO ON THE DIFFERENCES IN JUDGING BETWEEN AMERICA AND EUROPE, AND HIS FAVOURITE PHYSIQUES

Men's physique may be a global sport these days but

the way it is judged differs around the world. The difference in size is the most obvious contrast between European and American physiques. Americans seem to go for denser, more muscular frames whereas

Europeans favour a slender, conditioned look.

When I competed in the US

last year my physique was among the smaller on stage and I quickly realised the physique I had built to win the Arnold Classic Europe and the British Championships in 2013 needed more muscle. The judges confirmed this by saying my condition and aesthetics were on point; I just needed to be a bit fuller and carry that bit more muscle throughout my physique.

I always advise people who have competed to get feedback from the judges in order to improve next time and this is precisely what I did in the US, so I've been working hard this last year to bulk up a little as most pro shows are held in America.

Another crucial difference I noticed was the posing. The US is trying to position men's physique far away from bodybuilding so the



KEVIN HORTON





judges prefer softer, more natural poses rather than the more forced, over-tensed posing that is common in Europe to show the physique off.

If I'm honest, this is where I struggled in my American shows. Because my background and training are based around bodybuilding, I wanted to show off my condition, shape and overall physique by crunching down on my poses and emphasising my lat spread to give that X shape look that goes down well in Europe but gets frowned upon in America. It was my own fault and it showed in my placings. Hopefully this year I will come back and give the American judges what they want.

People often ask me how big you have to be for men's physique, which is a difficult question to answer because of the judging differences.

I have always said it is all about having a well-proportioned, aesthetic physique that fits your individual height and frame.

In the amateur ranks I competed in height classes but the IFBB pro league is an open height class so I've been up against the likes of Steve Cook, who is about 6 ft 2 and weighs in at 94 kg. In comparison I am 5 ft 10 and weigh 86 kg on stage. Steve has to carry much more muscle than me as he has a bigger frame to fill. If I carried that sort of weight on stage I would be competing in the bodybuilding classes.

That being said, I have been following the pro league for a while now and am slightly concerned that the successful men's physique competitors are getting bigger each year.

## **OLYMPIA SHOWDOWN**

I flew out to watch last year's Olympia weekend in Las Vegas, which featured men's physique for only the second time.

It came down to a battle between Jeremy Buendia and Sadik Hadzovic and I was glad Jeremy won because his physique and package are more realistic for me to achieve whereas Sadik (for whom I have a lot of respect and who has insane shape and conditioning) carries a lot more muscle. Had Sadik won, it would have meant me having a full year out bulking up to try and make his weight and size.

There are two men's physique competitors I respect above all but for vastly different reasons.

The first is Felipe Franco from

Brazil, who I like because to me, his aesthetics and proportions are perfect for men's physique. His midsection is flawless, and from my early years of training, a great midsection was what I always trained for. Yes, genetics plays a part in how symmetrical your abs are but the really important factors are hard work and dedication to sculpt, thicken and taper the midsection; Felipe has done this perfectly. The rest of his physique is well proportioned and conditioned also.

The second guy I really admire is Steve Cook and although he has a great physique, my reason for choosing him is down to what he does off stage rather than on it.

He is a great ambassador for bodybuilding and probably the most genuine guy I have met in the industry so far. He always has time for fans and, most importantly, finds that balance between work and family time. That's something else I'll be striving for this year! **FLEX**

# NINA ROSS

THE IFBB BIKINI PRO ON THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING YOUR CARDIO REGIME RIGHT

**To get stage lean you need to drop your body fat below a healthy sustainable level.** Normally that means doing cardio, making serious changes to your diet, or a combination of both. It's an area people often struggle with and rarely know what's best. One person's advice on

the subject will usually conflict with another's.

Still, it's often the case that competitors believe cardio is what will set them apart from their opponents on stage. This can lead to an obsession with cardio and people being drawn into spending hours on the treadmill every

day. The truth is, that really isn't necessary.

You're probably now thinking: "How on Earth can cardio not be necessary?" Well, it's quite simple. If you have to perform hours of cardio every day to get in stage-ready shape, it normally means one of three things:

- 1** You haven't given yourself enough time to get ready for the stage. You therefore have to cram as much as possible into the last few weeks to get in contest shape. Not a good move.
- 2** You've "bulked" excessively in the offseason. You then find you have to work extra hard to get rid of the body fat you've gained—fat you may have mistakenly thought to be muscle.
- 3** Your training and/or diet plan may not be properly tailored to your needs.

## DON'T RUSH

Let me start by addressing the first point. When choosing a show, you need to look at yourself and seek an honest opinion from a coach.

Allow yourself plenty of time to get ready—don't rush it. Trying to do six months' worth of work in four months is not only stressful for the body and potentially dangerous to hormone function, but is also likely to take its toll emotionally.

People doing this tend to start obsessing over cardio, performing 90 minutes plus every day on top of their weights and diet. This is only ever going to cause more harm than good.

Cardio should be used to burn a few hundred calories a day at most, not 500 plus. That kind of expenditure can have harmful effects on the thyroid and adrenal glands, particularly in women. When combined with a low-calorie diet this can cause all manner of problems, including exhaustion and rebounding significantly after your competition.



KEVIN HORTON



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### BULKING UP

It constantly astounds me when I hear bikini girls say, "I'm bulking." It's crazy to hear this from women who are so reliant on aesthetics. It also shows a failure to understand the long-term effects on their hormones and metabolism that can be caused by gaining 12-15 kg offseason.

Bikini is supposed to be achievable, attainable, sustainable and healthy. A 12-15 kg bulk is not a good idea. It won't be muscle and it's certainly not healthy. It's fat you're going to have to shed. That means a lot of cardio to get rid of the excess fat, which will inevitably eat into your hard-earned muscle gains.

### PERSONALISED PLANS

Your diet and training plans have to be individually tailored. When I'm working with my personal training clients, I tailor their calorie intakes and training to suit their individual lifestyles, goals and metabolism through close monitoring of body fat to weight ratios, circumferences and photos. This means I can adapt their training and diet to suit where they are at any time because I know exactly what is going on with their bodies.

The effort they put in at the gym, combined with a tailored diet, will result in the desired body fat reduction without the need for too much cardio. You may be surprised to learn that my clients rarely do more than 30 minutes of low intensity cardio to burn 2-300 calories.

I want them to have plenty of energy for their main session on the gym floor. This is where we sculpt the body in a way that'll set us apart from the person next to us on stage. Following a generic diet or training regime that incorporates endless amounts of cardio will not help you maximise your potential and can be dangerous to your health.

### GOOD WAYS TO BURN FAT

High intensity interval training is one of the most popular ways to burn fat at the moment. When done for very short bursts it can really help shred fat. However, excessively long bouts can be damaging by putting significant stress on the nervous system and



**"YOU SHOULDN'T NEED TO DO MORE THAN 30 MINUTES OF DAILY STEADY-STATE CARDIO AND SPRINT WORK"**

increasing levels of the fat-storing hormone cortisol.

Short sprints are a good option as, when done correctly, sprinting is great for glute and hamstring activation as well as burning calories.

If you'd rather skip the cardio altogether, Olympic lifting is a good alternative. It's very explosive and

requires an incredible amount of muscle recruitment, therefore burning plenty of calories.

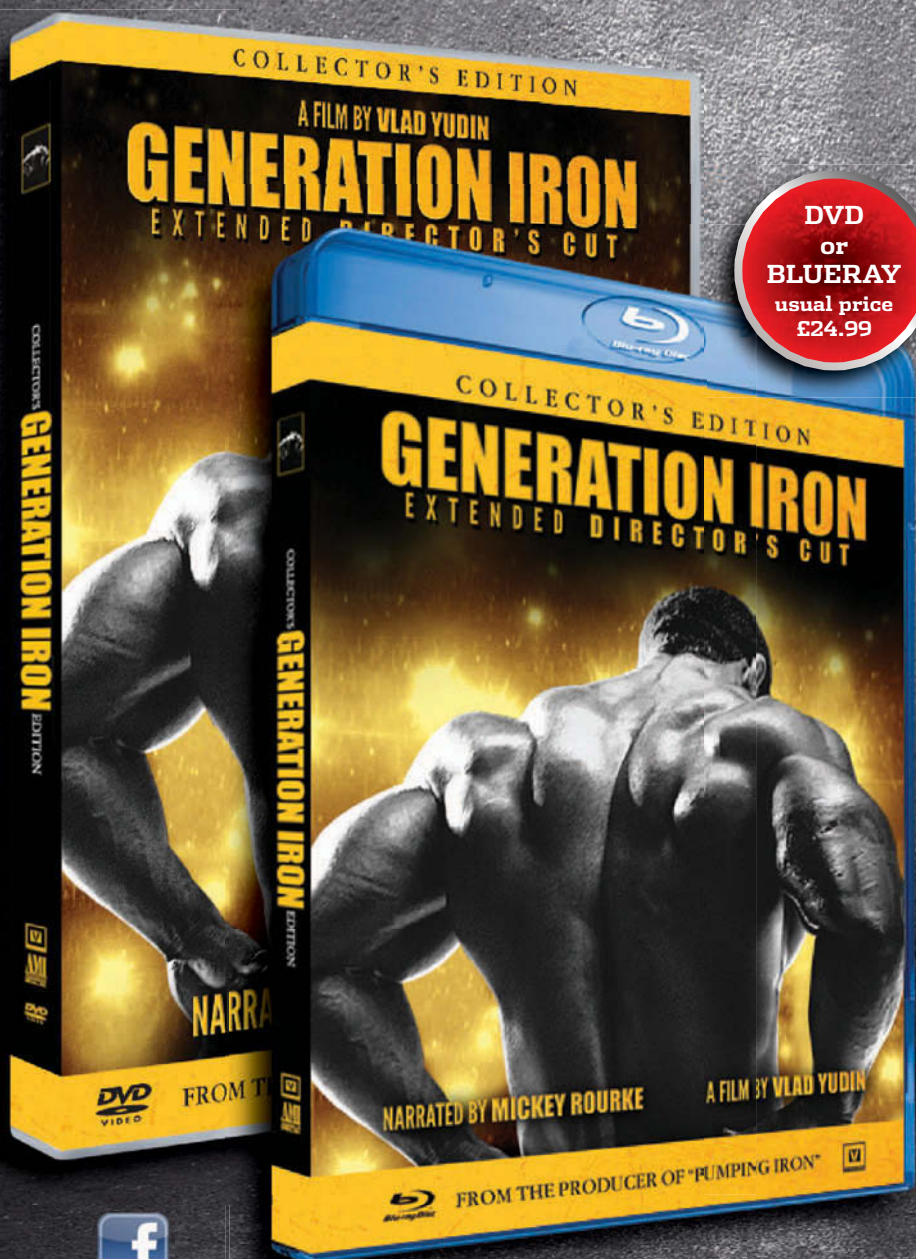
For me though, if you use your offseason correctly and are following an appropriately tailored plan, you shouldn't need to do more than 30 minutes of daily steady-state cardio and sprint work.



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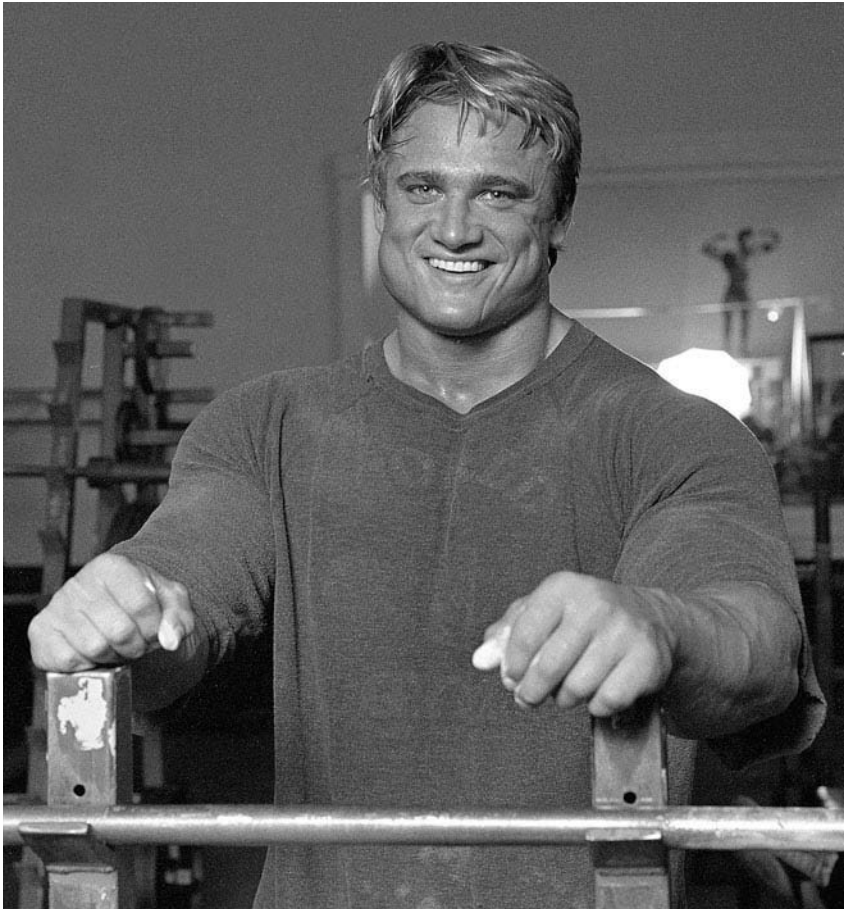


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# TOM PLATZ

**THE HARDEST TRAINING BODYBUILDER OF ALL TIME**

**■ “You know you really drove me mad sometimes,”** Tom Platz told me a few years after he placed a controversial third at the 1981 Mr Olympia. “That clicking and cranking sound of your camera going off all the time really affected my concentration, when I was training!”

Of course he had a point—back in the early 1980s I was forced to take sneak shots of him while he was training at Gold’s Gym and World Gym because I wasn’t working for Joe Weider back then. Also, in those days I was using a Mamiya 645 camera, which made a helluva racket when you pressed the shutter and moved onto the next

frame. Someone once said that it sounded like an old-fashioned cash register, and they weren’t far wrong.

The thing was, Tom Platz was one of the greatest bodybuilders in the world at that time and here he was training at the two best gyms in the world. What was I supposed to do? He was hot favourite to win the 1981 Mr Olympia in Columbus, Ohio, and even to this day, I still personally feel that he was robbed. He placed third but he definitely should have won the show, in my view anyway!

At that time, just the mention of his name to any dedicated hardcore bodybuilder, in any part of the world, would immediately catch their

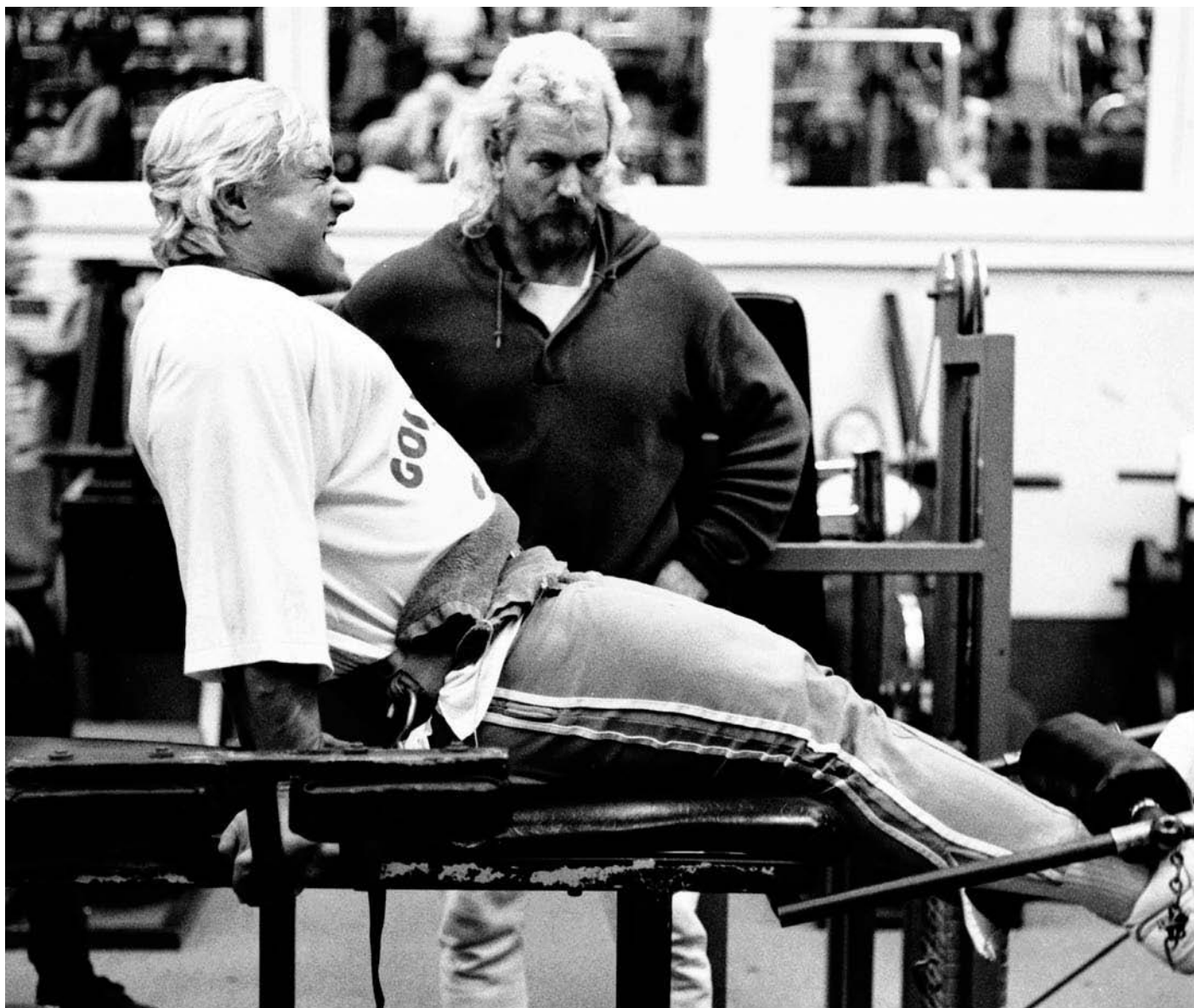
attention. When you consider just how much this guy changed his whole appearance and shape of his body, then you might just be able to convince yourself to believe in miracles. I mean the guy had so much going against him, didn’t he? Everyone kept saying that sure, he had the greatest thighs in the world, but his upper body was way behind by comparison. However, when he showed up at the 1981 Mr Olympia, just about everyone was gob-smacked at the amazing sight of the new Tom Platz. His muscular thickness was phenomenal; every single body part was ripped.

Although many were astonished by this display of pure muscular mass in Columbus, there were some who weren’t surprised at all. One of these was Mike Mentzer. “Tom Platz,” he told me, “trained extremely hard all year for that contest. He was the one guy in Gold’s who trained hard all winterlong. He just went to failure on every single rep, and I remember saying to my brother Ray that this guy must be really serious. I had no idea what he looked like underneath his sweatsuit, but then when I saw him by the pool at my house just before the contest, I couldn’t believe my eyes. He had put on at least twelve pounds of pure muscle mass just to his upper body alone. Now his delts, pecs and lats were almost equal to his incredible legs, which are among the greatest I’ve seen in my life. I simply knew he would be unbelievable at the Olympia.”

Another muscle enthusiast who was also not in the least surprised at the improvement in Tom Platz was Canadian bodybuilding champion John Cardillo, who was known for the intensity of his workouts. This is what he said to me after his visit to California during the winter of 1981: “Platz is training like a man possessed. I’ve never seen anything like it. The intensity he puts into each set has to be seen to be believed. In fact,







he sometimes screams because of the intense pain that builds up inside his muscles. You should go and see it for yourself."

And so I did. I made two visits to California during 1981 and just could not believe the difference in Tom between what I saw in March that year and what I was faced with in August, only five or six weeks before the Olympia. In fact, I was astounded. During my first visit in March for the IFBB California Grand Prix, I almost didn't recognise him. He was puffing, panting and struggling doing standing presses

behind the neck on the Smith machine. When he reached the point where he couldn't perform another strict rep from his shoulders, he changed the exercise into a jerk or push-press. He dipped his knees and slightly split his legs just like weightlifters do, until the bar was right above his head again. From this position he concentrated on slowly resisting the bar as much as possible as it made its way slowly back down to his shoulders. This jerking followed by negative-only lowering was kept up until he did not have the strength or energy to budge the bar

another inch. His two training partners then lifted the bar up from his shoulders, so that he could continue to do as many negative-only reps to total failure. After this amazing set was over he just collapsed onto a bench—he was absolutely incapable of further effort.

In August 1981 I returned to California where Greg (Rocky) DeFerro was training hard over at Joe Gold's World Gym alongside Roy Callender, Bertil Fox, Samir Bannout and Bronston Austin. At Gold's Gym you could watch Mike and Ray





Mentzer, Andreas Cahling, Reid Schindle, Ron Koontz and Robbie Robinson, all training at one time or another. There was also Tim Belknap in the process of transforming himself in only three weeks to win the 1981 AAU Mr America contest. While all these great bodybuilders were working out at their own favourite muscle factory, one young fanatic was using both muscle emporiums and that was the one and only Tom Platz. Tom used the excellent facilities of both World Gym and Gold's Gym and he made himself the talk of the town when

he forced himself through such brutally intense workouts. The muscular improvement he had made between March and August was simply mind-blowing!

Many people have asked me just how Tom Platz really trained and while words can hardly do justice to the experience, I will try my best to convey what his workouts were like. He did his first workout at 9 am every morning either at Gold's or World Gym, depending upon his needs or fancy. He would arrive at the gym in his new red Corvette accompanied by his friend and training partner. He was always dressed from head to toe in full training gear, and carried a good supply of powdered chalk, which he used liberally on his hands before each and every set. After greeting the gym staff, he would find a quiet corner of the gym to spend at least twenty minutes stretching, before he touched a weight. He would sit on the floor in a kind of splits position, slowly stretching every major muscle group until he felt that his muscles were warmed up and revitalised properly and his joints felt lubricated enough and ready for the task at hand.

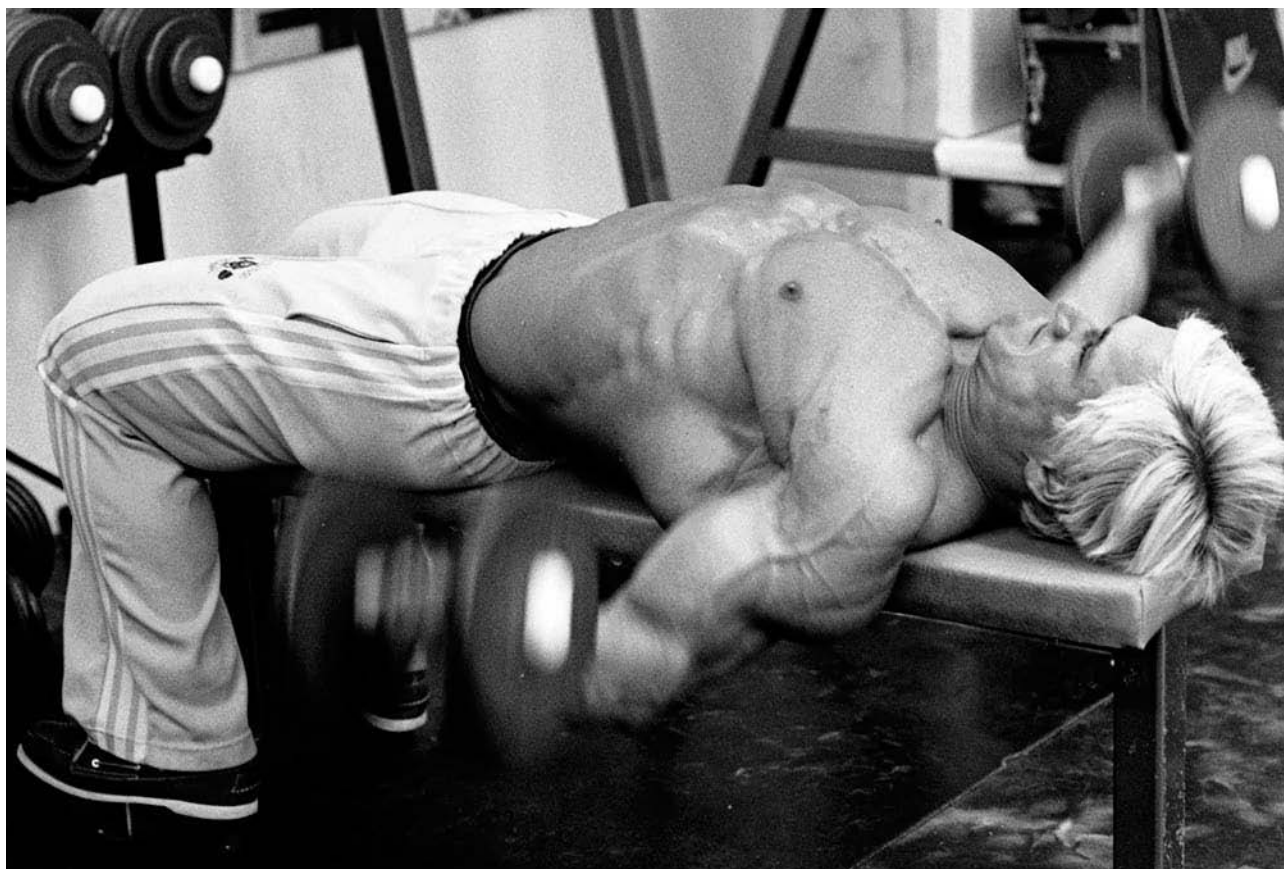
All the time I observed Tom training in California, I can't really say that I saw him work with extremely heavy poundages, except maybe on the hack machine, where he really piled on the discs and did five sets of 15 reps with 500 pounds. The hack machine was often used in place of his favourite exercise—full squats. This was so that he could keep the size of his amazing thighs under control. On full squats he really did go heavy. Amazingly, he often did eight to ten sets of full squats, for eight to 20 reps, working up to 635 pounds! He also had a fondness for doing high-rep squats, and once did 52 reps with 350 pounds before collapsing exhaustedly on the floor. He actually once declared: "I was built to squat!"

Despite the fact that Gold's Gym had many different state-of-the-art leg extension machines, including Nautilus, Tom always used an old handmade one that no one else seemed to bother with. He swore by this leg extension machine, and you can see a photo of him training on it here.

The core of his chest routine was simple and will surprise those of you who think you need all those fancy variable resistance chest machines. Tom used primarily the same basic exercises that great bodybuilders such as Arnold, Sergio, Franco, Dave Draper and Bertil Fox used to build their incredible chests. Two of these exercises were the bench press and dumbbell flies. However, nobody performed them the way Tom Platz did!

He began his chest workout with the dumbbell flye. Sometimes he raised one end of the bench by about six inches so that it gave him a very slight incline. He often wrapped his legs around the other end of the bench—a manoeuvre that prevented him from arching his back when the going got unbearable. On his first set he used two fairly light dumbbells to warm up his pectorals and shoulder joint attachments. He lowered each dumbbell just a little bit further each time so that his muscles, tendons and the whole joint area got used to the terrific stretch he would give them later.

After a short break he picked out a pair of sixty pounders from the dumbbell rack and started his first working set. Keeping his arms completely bent at all times, he lowered those dumbbells as far down as he possibly could. In fact, he seemed each time to be trying to get his elbows down so low that maybe one day they might even touch the bench beneath him. From this very low position he squeezed those dumbbells back up so that they were right above his chest again, about six inches away from his upper pecs.



The intensity he put into this one very simple basic exercise had to be seen to be believed and thus appreciated. You see, when he trained to failure he didn't train to failure the way anyone else did; where most people would be reaching muscular failure in an exercise, Tom Platz was just beginning his set! That's right, when Tom reached a point in the set when he just couldn't do another rep in strict fashion no matter what, he then began doing other things to his muscles to make them grow. For instance, when failure arrived in the dumbbell fly motion, Tom held the dumbbells at the contracted position for a few seconds, breathing in and out deeply, so that he could give his exhausted muscles a new lease of life. He then started off again after this short breather until once again failure set in. From here he lowered the dumbbells very slowly in strict negative fashion, and because he

was too weak to squeeze them back up again, he was forced to press them up using the strength of his triceps. He went on and on like this until even this was too much for the muscles to take, and all he could do now was move the dumbbells out and back just a few inches for the burn. Only he knew what that burning feeling felt like; only he knew what was happening inside his muscles, and all I can say is, rather him than me! In fact, I often felt my stomach turn as he went on and on during a set, completely oblivious to everything around him. I doubt whether anyone else in the world could stand this amount of self-inflicted torture. Yet he always appeared to have total control over every single repetition, no matter how hard it was.

He did many sets of this one exercise—maybe it was six or ten or even more, I didn't count. He rested a good three or four minutes between

each set and because of the build-up of intensity, he was forced to reduce the poundages on some of his sets, finally only being able to work with a pair of forty pounders.

When he decided he'd had enough of flyes, he headed over to the flat bench for some bench pressing. Even before he hit the bench, the whole area—especially the upper part of the pecs—was pumped up to max. Amazingly, I watched him use only an Olympic barbell plus two forty-five pound plates for his sets of bench presses. Because his pectoral muscles were in such a state of muscular exhaustion, Tom had only the strength of his relatively fresh but strong triceps to rely on. However, this pre-exhaust state was exactly what Mr Platz was after and he cared not a monkey's uncle about how much weight was on the bar. He wanted to set his pecs on fire and this was the way to do it. After all, he'd already done



his fair share of regular heavy benching in the past.

The grip he used for his bench presses might be described as narrow by today's standards but this allowed him to keep his forearms almost parallel throughout most of the movement. He used a false grip to allow the bar to rest entirely on the fleshy part of his palms, which completely eliminated the need for any gripping using the thumbs. Once again he did many very strict repetitions, squeezing and contracting his pectoral muscles throughout the set. Just when I thought he would never get the bar off his chest Tom would somehow huff and puff a little bit harder and low and behold that bar would slowly start to move upwards again. When finally the bar would not move even one inch, he arched his back slightly so that he could begin to cheat a little. It required just the right amount of cheat to get that bar going again so that he could now concentrate on the lowering, or negative, part of the movement.

Pretty soon even this form of cheating became ineffective and now his training partner quickly grabbed the bar and gave him just enough assistance so that it kept on moving. It was all negative-only reps from now on because even the great Tom Platz became too weak to push that bar upwards another inch. The negative-only part of the exercise seemed to take an awfully long time and I marvelled at his energy, endurance and sheer willpower to withstand so much intense pain. After maybe eight sets of these bench presses had been completed, I decided I couldn't stand to watch any more, so I left the gym. I don't know if he did any more work for the chest that day but knowing him, I bet he did!

While all this may sound quite incredible and maybe even unbelievable to some of you, let me tell you that this is nothing compared to the





day I saw him perform another very simple basic exercise, namely dumbbell curls. But, of course how could it ever be simple when you do it the Tom Platz way? For these dumbbell curls Tom used a seated incline press bench set to a very abrupt 85° angle. He performed these dumbbell curls in an alternating fashion starting the exercise with both palms facing the sides of his body. He then started to curl up one of the dumbbells with his thumb pointing upwards, as if he were doing a hammer curl, but then when he reached the half way position, he rotated the dumbbell outwards, away from his body as it continued on its way the top position. He then allowed this working dumbbell to carry on right over his shoulder and as his elbows were being raised, he contracted the biceps muscle as hard as he possibly could, before he finally lowered the dumbbell slowly

back down again. He did exactly the same for the other arm. Tom appeared to do a lot of repetitions on his first set and once again I just could not believe his ability to withstand so much pain. As the reps grew harder and harder I thought at one time that his cheekbones might burst right through his skin, because of the effort and power that was needed to keep those dumbbells moving. When things eventually got so bad that he had no strength left to complete another strict rep in good style, he raised his hips right off the bench so that he was standing up, and with this one simple action was able to carry on the set while his poor old biceps muscles were wondering what the hell was happening to them!

Pretty soon Tom was stuck again and now he did something I've never seen done before in the process of furthering the cause of intensity.

He dropped one of the dumbbells onto the floor and focused on the one that was left in his hand. Apparently, because he only had one arm to concentrate on, this meant that he could continue to force out a few more reps. He had to cheat the dumbbell up to the shoulder position and from here he slowly allowed it to descend under perfect control, before almost willing it to rise up again.

This one set (and he did at least another six or so just like it) must have lasted up to five minutes, but it was still not over, because he now began to squeeze that one dumbbell back and forth a few inches, in the contracted position, until the pain couldn't be stood any longer, even by the great Tom Platz. This squeezing, isometric contraction when the muscle had just undergone a very intense workload seemed to be a popular technique with Tom,



## TOM PLATZ CONTEST CAREER

### 1974

AAU Teen Mr America,  
Most Muscular, 3rd

AAU Teen Mr America, 2nd

### 1975

AAU Mr Michigan, Overall

AAU Mr South-eastern USA, 3rd

### 1976

AAU Mr America,  
Short class, 3rd

### 1977

AAU Mr America,  
Short class, 2nd

AAU Mr South-eastern USA, 1st

### 1978

AAU Mr America,  
Short class, 2nd

IFBB USA World Qualifier,  
Middleweight, 1st

World Amateur Championships,  
Middleweight, 1st and Overall

### 1979

Mr Olympia, Lightweight, 8th

### 1980

Grand Prix Pennsylvania, 10th

Night of Champions, 12th

Mr Olympia 9th

Pro Mr Universe, 2nd

World Pro Championships, 2nd

### 1981

Mr Olympia, 3rd

### 1982

Mr Olympia, 6th

### 1984

Mr Olympia, 9th

### 1985

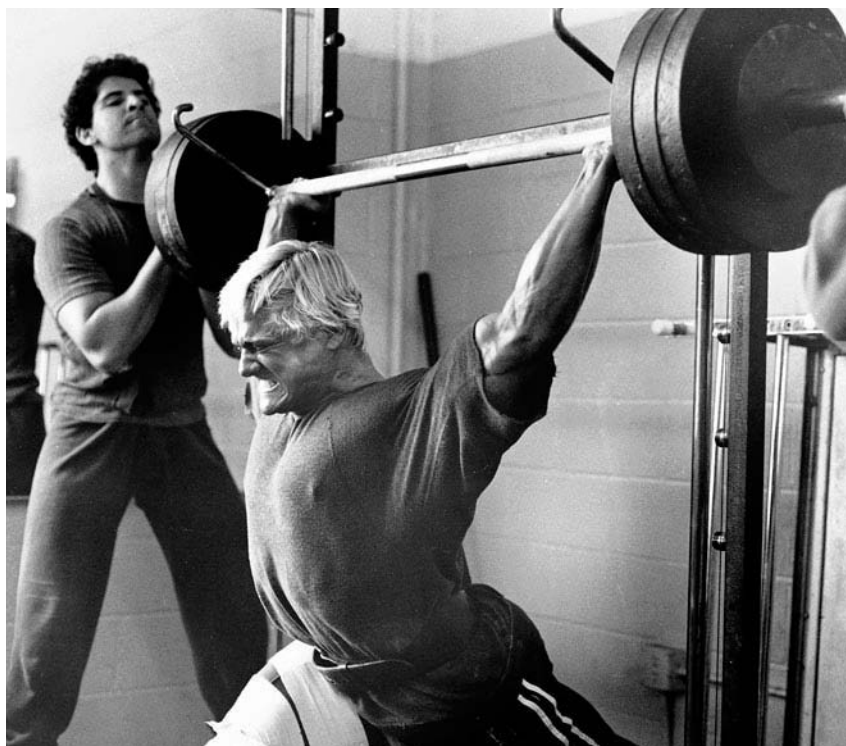
Mr Olympia 7th

### 1986

Mr Olympia, 11th

### 1987

Detroit Pro Championships, 6th



because I remember seeing him raise or squeeze a barbell back and forth from his thighs when he finished a shoulder routine, and surprisingly he used only a seventy pound barbell.

During 1982 I again visited Gold's Gym and World Gym in California in an effort to observe and photograph him as he pushed himself through more torturous pre-Olympia workouts. As usual, the sight of him training with the weights was inspiring to watch but I sensed something was amiss. Several times during an arm workout Tom had to stop all training in order to receive manipulation therapy from his training partner, and the large amount of heavy crepe bandage fastened tightly around his right biceps revealed all. Only three weeks before the 1982 Olympia he severely injured the tendons to his right biceps and was told by his doctor to stop all training at once. In other words, he was to abandon his plans of entering the 1982 Mr Olympia after having trained and dieted all year. Like the true champion he

was, he went against the doctor's advice and continued his training. It's now history that Tom Platz, placed only sixth in London, and was far from his best. When he arrived back in California he went straight into hospital to have his arm operated on and needed many months of rest and recuperation after the operation.

Sadly, he never again looked as good as he did at the 1981 Mr Olympia, because of that biceps injury and although he competed for another five years, he could never build the type of upper body mass he so desired.

I have photographed and observed hundreds of the world's greatest bodybuilders since those Tom Platz days, and even though super-strong mass monsters such as Ronnie Coleman, Mike Mentzer, Casey Viator, Jay Cutler and Bertil Fox spring to mind when it comes to the subject of high intensity training, no one trained as hard as Tom Platz. He was without a doubt the hardest training bodybuilder of all time. **FLEX**

# LAST SET

**YOUR  
ONE-STOP  
SOURCE  
FOR  
MUSCLE  
NEWS**

## ZACK'S BACK

**KING KONG KHAN ON  
PROMOTING HIS OWN  
SHOW AND RETURNING  
TO THE STAGE**

Round-up  
from the  
2014 NPC  
Nationals

Is posing a  
lost art?

Bodybuilding  
news and  
views from  
around the  
continent

FIBO update

KEVIN HORTON



**Zack Khan**



# GET SET FOR A CLASSIC

**ZACK KHAN GIVES THE LOWDOWN ON  
HIS MOVE INTO PROMOTING**

**GILES:** I hear you're running your own amateur IFBB contest in England, the ZKK Classic.

**What made you do that?**

**ZACK KHAN:** I always wanted to do my own show but never had the opportunity until I got talking with UKBFF president Bill Tierney and mentioned it. He said they had a good venue in St Albans, just north of London and if I wanted I could have

it. I'm very grateful to Bill and Wanda for giving me this opportunity. It'll be on June 28th.

**What can we expect to see?**

You're going to see an event that will give back to the athletes as much as possible. I'll be bringing the best guest poser in the IFBB over from America—Fred "Biggie" Smalls, awarded the best poser at the Olympia two years

running. If you're going to bring someone to be a guest poser then bring the best to entertain the crowd. I could have guest posed at my own show but I say get someone who can do it much better than me. Don't get me wrong; I'll give the audience a quick flash, maybe.

**What else is new in Zack's world?**

I'm definitely looking to do some shows, probably the later Olympia qualifiers. I want to diet down to see what improvements I've made. Since the Olympia last year I've been at home in the UK on a routine and training properly enough to be able to improve. Most of my improvements have been focused on my legs. When I took 18 months off training them after my accident in 2010 I was held back, so I've been working them hard to bring them up to par with the rest of my physique. I've also got my own supplement range coming out this year called Zack Khan's Underground Research that I'm very excited about. I've been working hard on that for the past few months so keep an eye out for that.

**What did you think of the Olympia last year?**

We all knew that it was going to be a two-man show with the continuing rivalry between Phil and Kai, but the thing was that Shawn Rhoden looked bloody awesome and I'd have actually preferred if they'd have given the title to Shawn. Phil and Kai were going at it onstage and being confrontational and unprofessional and they should have had points deducted as a result of that. Besides, Shawn is more aesthetic and has better qualities than Phil and Kai combined. As for Flex Lewis, he looked incredible and he's got no real competition in that class. The only two that I could see giving Flex any real competition are Dave Henry and Eduardo Correa, but both of them have structural flaws that Flex doesn't have.

# ITALIAN MINI-BEAST

Mirco Caselli  
looking peeled



■ I did a double take when top Euro-trainer Patrick Tuor sent me some recent photographs of Mirco Caselli. “A middleweight? Really?” I asked Patrick.

It seemed so, yes. Packing some proper thundering thickness onto his frame it was no shock when Mirco won the 80 kg category at the Arnold Classic in Ohio in 2014—after he just managed to get below the weight limit.

He was planning to return to Columbus this year in the under-85 kg category.

“Last year I had to downsize a little,” said Mirco. “I need more muscle if I am to achieve my aim of battling for that overall amateur title.”

When quizzed about the state of bodybuilding in Italy, he replied: “We don’t have many athletes that carry a lot of mass. Classic bodybuilding is more in vogue nowadays. I try to represent that part of Italy that dreams about the pro level and going hardcore.”

I asked what were the best and worst aspects of bodybuilding. “The best aspect is that moment you step onstage. After months of hard work and sacrifices it’s that adrenaline rush you get back stage that I love.

“The worst aspect is the fact that you often have to alienate yourself from normal everyday life and deprive yourself of all the delicious food that my home country of Italy has to offer.”

Mirco likes to live in the fast lane. “I love to race cars and have a good friend who is a test driver for Zonda Pagani and I take every chance I have to drive with 800 brake horsepower,” he told me.



# EUROPE'S BEST 212 COMPETITOR?

■ **If you discount US-based Welshman Flex Lewis,**

I'd say Thomas Benagli from Italy deserves the title. I was pleased in 2013 when he went down in size but up in quality by switching from the open to the 212 category. I saw him compete in Spain in 2011 and thought then that dropping weight would reward his shape and structure. His decision culminated in a great year with a third and a fourth in American pro 212 contests—no mean feat for an outsider from Europe.

**GILES: Was it a difficult decision to switch to the 212s?**

**THOMAS BENAGLI:**

I completely changed my diet and achieved my best ever condition. But it was very hard and I needed several competitions to find the condition that presented me at my best in 2014. No doubt this class is perfect for my body; with this new, lower

body weight, my shape dramatically improved and I became far more competitive. With a few pounds less on my physique, the proportions and V-shape of my body look better.

**What did you weigh as an open pro?**

I weighed 227 lbs and I could not increase that because it would hide my V-shape. I believe that bodybuilders should be beautiful and elegant, not only big. If being bigger means losing your V-shape and appearing squat and ugly, you risk losing the soul of the sport.

**What are your plans for 2015?**

Easy: qualification for Mr Olympia by winning a competition or getting good placings to get the necessary points. Many years ago I said to myself that my first time at the Mr Olympia would not be as a spectator but as an athlete, and I am ready to keep my promise.



**Thomas Benagli combines mass and structure**

MATT MARSH

Miha Zupin has the amateur Olympia in his sights



pictures where at four or more weeks out you could be forgiven for thinking the shots were taken on the day of the show, he's so ripped.

I asked Miha, who won the heavy-weight and overall IFBB European Championships in 2014, if the online rumours that he went zero carb for his entire contest diet were true.

"No," he replied. "I usually start my diet with very, very low carbs and for the last month I'm usually at zero carb. It's not what I like but it is the only way to get in good shape, along with two 45-minute cardio sessions per day to get really ripped."

Miha has been working with top contest prep coach Mauro Sassi. "Working with Mauro is great and we have worked together from the start," Miha told me. "He is a man who says it like it is and he also provides a lot of useful information."

Currently setting his sights on the amateur Olympia title in Madrid this June—and possibly the amateur Olympia in Liverpool in October—I couldn't resist asking him if, after once having seen him forget to tan his face at the amateur Arnold Classic, he'd remember to do so next time.

"Ah, yes, thank you for reminding me of that," he laughed. "We are paying attention to details more now."

# SLOVENIAN SHREDDER

■ If there's one thing I really respect it's granite-like conditioning.

Hailing from the Eastern European country of Slovenia, a country of just two million people, Miha Zupin is one

exceptional athlete whose career I have followed avidly since he came to the IFBB after winning the overall Mr Universe title in 2010.

He's been freaking out everyone on social media with his pre-show



# FIBO POWER PRO

**AFTER A YEAR'S ABSENCE, PRO BODYBUILDING IS SET TO RETURN TO FIBO IN GERMANY.**

■ **The world's biggest health and fitness expo last hosted an IFBB pro show in 2013** when Americans Cedric McMillan and Beth Cisternino walked away with the men's open and women's fitness titles.

The 2015 FIBO Power Pro is scheduled for April 11th and will be the first pro show in Germany for two years. This time around there will only

be a men's open pro category but the mass monsters will share the stage with the best of Germany's amateur bikini talent who will be battling it out in the DBFV Bikini Cup. Dennis James and the ever-popular Markus Rühl will emcee.

The Saturday night show is the highlight of the huge four-day FIBO event in Cologne. The international

trade show attracts visitors from around the world and all the big names, including Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sylvester Stallone, have attended.

Whether you're into bodybuilding, powerlifting, strongman, mixed martial arts or even CrossFit, there is always something to keep you entertained.



**FIBO top 4 in 2013. From left: 4 Robert Piotrkowicz, 3 Ed Nunn, 1 Cedric McMillan, 2 Johnnie Jackson**

MATTHIAS BUSSE & OLIVER RINK



**Lindsay Bruce winning  
the under-80 kg  
bodybuilding last year**

# **BODYPOWER SHOWDOWN**

**TOP AMATEURS FROM BRITAIN AND ABROAD  
WILL LOCK HORNS FROM MAY 15TH TO 17TH.**

■ They will compete at the **USN BodyPower Classic**, which is once again being held on the main expo stage so visitors to the NEC in Birmingham on the Saturday and Sunday will be able to watch the action for the price of the expo ticket.

GARY PHILLIPS



The top three in all classes will receive invitations to the Amateur Olympia in Liverpool on October 31st and November 1st. As an added incentive, the UKBFF will cover the costs of the trip for the overall bodybuilding, men's physique and bikini fitness champions.

Amateur show promoter Martin Davies says the event is open to UKBFF amateurs and IFBB-affiliated athletes from other countries who go through their national federations.

The Saturday night IFBB pro show at Body-Power includes 212, figure and wheelchair classes and is expected to feature another strong British line-up.

**Lola Onanuga winning the tall bikini fitness class in 2014**

## **USN BODYPOWER CLASSIC**

### **SATURDAY**

Women's physique

Junior men's bodybuilding 16-23

Junior men's physique 16-23

Masters bodybuilding over-40s

Masters men's physique over-40s

Bodybuilding up to 80 kg

Bodybuilding up to 90 kg

Bodybuilding over 90 kg

Classic Bodybuilding over 178 cm

Classic Bodybuilding up to 178 cm

### **SUNDAY**

Bodyfitness up to 163 cm

Bodyfitness over 163 cm

Junior bikini fitness 16-23

Masters bikini fitness over-35s

Bikini fitness up to 163 cm

Bikini fitness over 163 cm

Men's physique up to 178 cm

Men's physique over 178 cm



GARY PHILLIPS

## AMERICA'S NEW PROS

### BANTAMWEIGHT

- 1 James Shumpert
- 2 Robert Freeman Jr.

### LIGHTWEIGHT

- 1 Terrence Ruffin
- 2 Jon Frasier

### WELTERWEIGHT

- 1 Santiago Aragon
- 2 Denver Smith

### MIDDLEWEIGHT

- 1 David Paterik
- 2 Lindsey Moore

### LIGHT- HEAVYWEIGHT

- 1 Arthur Reed
- 2 Freddie McCray III

### HEAVYWEIGHT

- 1 Dominick Cardone
- 2 Allen Kuhl

### SUPER- HEAVYWEIGHT

- 1 Alexis Rivera Rolon
- 2 Michael Lockett

**Overall champion  
Alexis Rivera  
Rolon shows off  
his most muscular**



# AMERICA'S NEW PROS

**RESULTS FROM THE 2014 NPC NATIONALS**

■ **Maybe it was because, unlike most years,** there was no clear favourite, but the 33rd NPC Nationals proved to be one of the more compelling in recent memory. 202 of America's best amateur bodybuilders took to the stage in Miami last November, with the top two in each of the seven classes winning

the right to compete in the IFBB Pro League. Of those 14, half were either making their pro qualifier debut or had failed to crack the top 10 in any previous attempts.

The unheralded super-heavyweight and overall champion Alexis Rivera Rolon was from that group. He triumphed the old-fashioned

way—with proportion, shape, and conditioning. Based in Puerto Rico, Rolon became the first man from outside the 50 states to win America's top amateur bodybuilding title. Fittingly, he plans to make his pro debut at the inaugural IFBB Puerto Rico Pro in May. However he does there, his win in Miami

ISAAC HINDS



**Dominick Cardone**



**Arthur Reed**



**Alexis Rivera Rolon**



should inspire others to favour quality over quantity.

But despite Rolon's overall win, it's youngster Dominick Cardone whose name is on everyone's lips. The 21-year-old dominated the heavyweight class to become the joint youngest American pro (along with lightweight champ Terrence Ruffin) since Shane DiMora won his pro card at 19 nearly 30 years ago.

Cardone is still a work in progress. He needs to expand, especially in regards to his arms, chest, and lower lats. But he's only 21. The New Yorker won with his invisible waist, capacious delts, and finely separated quads—all qualities that drew eyes to him in comparisons. He has the ideal foundation for mass construction. If he can keep that slender middle as he builds, he could well become an Olympia mainstay over the next decade or two.

ISAAC HINDS

# BIGGIE SMALLS

## ■ Some bodybuilding pundits

say that posing is a lost art, but those who think so obviously have never seen Fred "Biggie" Smalls do his thing onstage. Most recently, Smalls seamlessly integrated bodybuilding poses with flawless popping, locking, moonwalking, and all-around funkiness to dance his way into the hearts of fans at the 2014 Mr Olympia and the 2014 EVLS Prague Pro. It was in the latter contest that the promoters, in no small part due to the standing ovation from the crowd, awarded Smalls with the Best Poser award and an engraved custom watch. Smalls graciously accepted his award and, of course, at the urging of the crowd and a well-timed tune



from the DJ, treated viewers to an encore. "It feels good to be respected for my style of posing," Smalls said. "One of the main reasons I started bodybuilding was to combine two of my favourites, lifting and entertaining, so for me to be able to entertain the fans is a dream come true." Smalls, who studied dance in college and does choreography for fitness, bodybuilding, and cheerleading, can be contacted via Instagram at

@fredbiggiesmalls and on Facebook at IFBB Pro Fred Biggie Smalls.

## SMALLS' FAVOURITE POSING ROUTINES

Kai Greene's Dirty Diana routine at the 2007 Keystone Pro

Darrem Charles at the 1998 Mr Olympia

All of Melvin Anthony's routines

IGOR KOPEK/EASTLABS.SK/EASTLABS.RU

# BODYBUILDER OF THE MONTH

BY JOHN PLUMMER, EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

## GORDON SINGH

**In a sport about size,** it's difficult for a man weighing 70 kg to stand out but Gordon Singh has managed to do that by twice winning the British lightweight title. Born in India but now living in Preston, he appears to defy nature by packing more muscle on 70 kg than appears possible. He also has good shape and consistently turns up shredded. Singh has now set his sights on a third national title in October. **FLEX**

### PREVIOUS WINNERS

January	Nathan De Asha
February	Dean Lesiak
March	Zack McGuirk

CHRISTOPHER BAILEY



# NEXT ISSUE

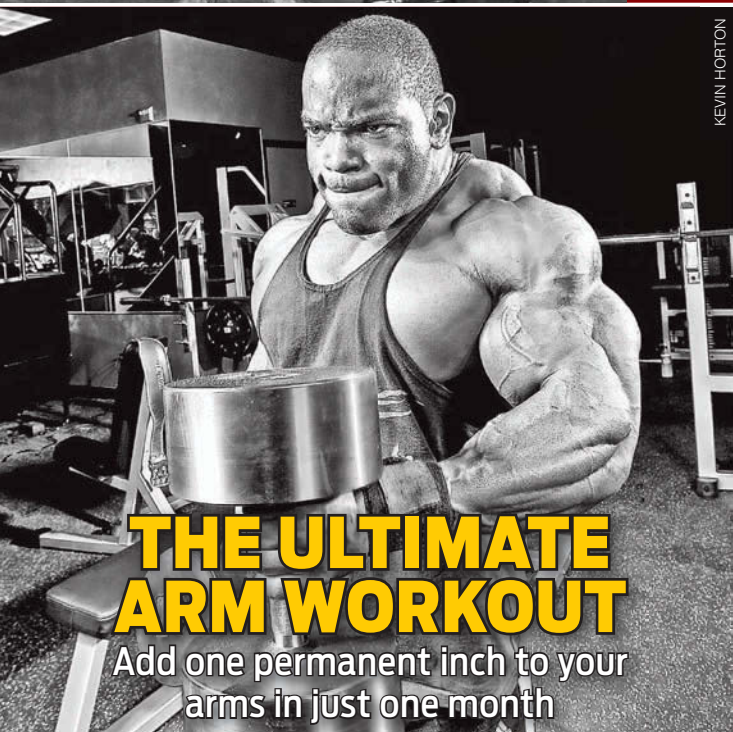
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# THE SHOT

FLEX

## CRITICAL EYE

**Dexter Jackson began his bodybuilding career** as a 137-pound bantamweight, and over the next 18 years, and nearly 100 additional pounds, he established himself as one of the best bodybuilders of his generation—until Sept. 27, 2008, when the 38-year-old proved he was the best. Against all odds, Jackson dethroned then-two-time Mr. Olympia Jay Cutler to become only the 12th man in history to hold the Sandow. Since then, the Blade has retained his edge, adding five more titles to bring his career total to 20. In this shot, Jackson eyes his physique during a workout, assessing strengths and weaknesses in his ever-constant quest to improve and perfect his physique. **FLEX**



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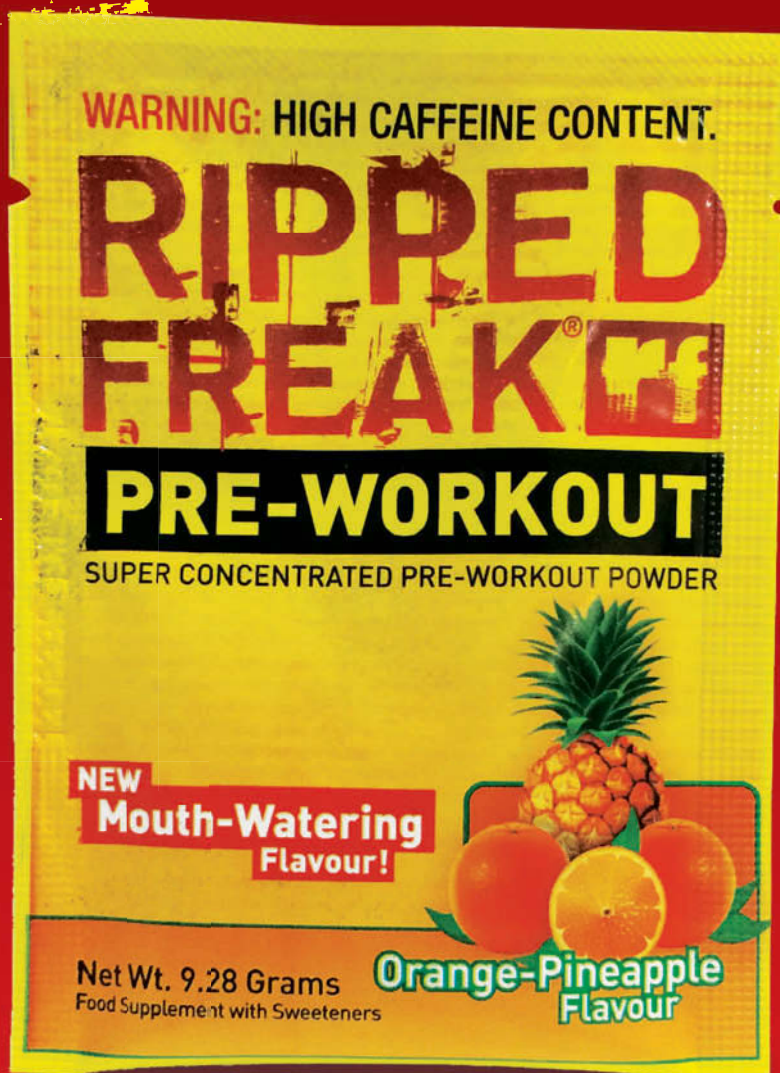
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